



PETROGRAD

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BRUSALEM

AKABAH

- 1 " JUNE 28, 1914 "
- 2 " THE MARNE "
- 3 " FIELD AND TRENCH "
- 4 " VERDUN "
- 5 " GALLIPOLI "
- 6 " THE DARK RUSSIAN FOREST "
- 7 " RETREAT FROM THE ISONZO "
- 8 " WAR IN THE HARBOR "
- 9 " JUTLAND "
- 10 " BATTLE OF THE GENERALS "
- 11 " THE BLACK BEAST "
- 12 " THROUGH THE WHEAT "
- 13 " THE LOOK OF BERLIN "
- 14 " PETROGRAD 1914 "
- 15 " DEFECTION "
- 16 " ON TO BAGDAD "
- 17 " REVOLT IN THE DESERT "
- 18 " THE BRIGHT AFRICAN SUN "
- 19 " DEFEAT "

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BAGDAD



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ARMAGEDDON

THE WORLD WAR IN LITERATURE

EDITED BY
EUGENE LÖHRKE



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TO THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER
WHO WAS A SOLDIER

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“And he gathered them together in a place called . . . Armageddon. . . . And there were voices and thunders and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. . . .”

From the Book of Revelation.

THE WORLD WAR IN LITERATURE

I, too, saw God through mud—

*The mud that cracked on cheeks when wretches smiled.
War brought more glory to their eyes than blood,
And gave their laughs more glee than shakes a child.*

Merry it was to laugh there—

*Where death becomes absurd and life absurder.
For power was on us as we slashed bones bare
Not to feel sickness or remorse of murder.*

I, too, have dropped off fear—

*Behind the barrage, dead as my platoon,
And sailed my spirit surging, light and clear
Past the entanglement where hopes lay strewn;*

And witnessed exultation—

*Faces that used to curse me, scowl for scowl,
Shine and lift up with passion of oblation,
Seraphic for an hour; though they were foul.*

I have made fellowships—

*Untold of happy lovers in old song.
For love is not the binding of fair lips
With the soft silk of eyes that look and long,*

By Joy, whose ribbon slips,—

*But wound with war's hard wire whose stakes are strong;
Bound with the bandage of the arm that drips;
Knit in the welding of the rifle-thong.*

I have perceived much beauty

*In the hoarse oaths that kept our courage straight;
Heard music in the silentness of duty;
Found peace where shell-storms spouted reddest spate.*

Nevertheless, except you share

*With them in hell the sorrowful dark of hell,
Whose world is but the trembling of a flare,
And heaven but as the highway for a shell,*

You shall not hear their mirth:

*You shall not come to think them well content
By any jest of mine. These men are worth
Your tears: You are not worth their merriment.*

WILFRED OWEN.

November 1917.

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THE WORLD WAR IN LITERATURE

I

ALTHOUGH little more than a decade has elapsed since the armistice, it is becoming apparent that no event in world history has ever called forth a richer or more varied body of literature than the World War.

That this should be so is logical. It is not enough to say that since the beginning of time war and love have furnished inevitable themes for the creative writer. Whatever its final form literature has for its inspiration the impulses and emotions of men under stress and strain. And from 1914 to 1918 the minds, imaginations and feelings of a good half of the civilized world were torn as never before in history.

This is not the place to discuss the logic of war in the general strife of living. Nor is it the purpose of "Armageddon" to furnish an argument for the pacifists by showing its very pronounced horrible side. Only the most dispassionate and objective treatment of the phenomena of mass emotion can give us a clue as to what war really is. But the Great War had this to distinguish it from other conflicts in history—that it mobilized not only more men and material resources than any before it, but that it organized every possible current of thought and feeling as well.

That the greater part of the civilized world should have been drawn into the war is, probably, merely a logical development of the intricate physical organization of the age. The shot at Sarajevo ignited a powder train that spread into a ring of fire and destruction, across Europe and a good part of Asia, penetrating remote desert places and jungle swamps in Africa. For the first time in history it became apparent that material civilization was its own greatest enemy; that Science could

draw the death mask over its Godhead; that Progress wore the two faces of Janus, fronting backward along the slippery, dark trail of human improvement as well as ahead toward what men call the light. And if to the artist mind of the world, the war furnished a picture, ranging in colour from the blazing sunrise of glory to the vision of humanity crucified, to the thinker it furnished a particularly desperate enigma.

War had reached a stage in development where the individual no longer counted, and in any state of affairs where the individual no longer counts the artist revolts. Whatever the objectives that set the flame of 1914 smouldering, the general outline of them was lost under the ruin. Where antagonisms were merely civilian hysterics, where one had to scrutinize the purpose of the whole thing with even more care than one watched for the head of an enemy through a trench periscope, the vast balloons of war idealism collapsed slowly; and naked and desperate, an aspect of human nature fought its way to the front that men had thought to forget.

Logic and reason had fled; madness alone could avail. The nations of the earth clutched and tore at each other with one final object looming across the red-grey horizon. Exhaustion or extinction—in the last analysis these were the goals.

Yet the nations of the world moved to the war as to some glorious pageant of re-creation which all had long awaited. However bitter the later protest, however staring and horrifying the final negation, such the fact was and remains. However meagre the political pretexts that launched the avalanche of destruction, however the masses were blinded or fooled by their leaders, the first cry that went up was one of mighty surrender to the event. "Now thank we our God. . . ." The few scattered voices of protest were lost in the mighty hymnal that welled out from millions of throats, from Austria, from Russia, from France, from Germany and England as well. The assassination of Jean Leon Jaurés by a son of a clerk of the civil court of Rheims on August 1 was an example of the pitch

to which the war fury had mounted. The crowd that gathered in front of Buckingham Palace and shouted for war on that fateful day of August 4 found its echoes tossed up and rolled back in waves of sound and fury from the throat of all Europe. *Men wanted this*, this terrible release from the penalties of safety and monotony. The day had come when the petty exactions of living could be swamped in the mighty ocean of self-surrender. The armed God would lead his friends to victory no matter what language they spoke or what creed they professed. The spirit that seized the nations was profoundly and deeply religious, as religious as the emotion of a crowd that sings its men to victory at a great football game. Even the inarticulate could weep and wave their flags. . . . Three years later when America joined in, when European eyes were drained of their tears, when life there was too hopeless even to be mourned over, when the dead in their shallow graves ringed in the living, we of America could still weep and cheer and wave our heroes to conquest in a storm of mob emotion.

Rupert Brooke, Alan Seeger, John Masefield, Ernst Lis-sauer, Gerhart Hauptmann were only a few of many poets and artists who, in the beginning, saw the dawn of a great new hope flame-coloured on the horizon of man's pettiness. Germany's poet-prophets had long anticipated the event, and those of France were not slow in joining in on the chorus. We may look back on all this, through the mist of blood and tears, with the eyes of disillusionment now. But that very remote literature of war idealism was often very pure. Its appeal, thin and fine as a bugle note, is not to be resisted. The literature of protest followed and grew to mammoth proportions. But the literature of idealism comes first in any consideration of the authentic imaginative writing that the Great War produced.

2

The result of the Great War is in no way less calculable than in its effects on the minds and ways of thought of the war

generation. The war has been blamed for many things, perhaps for too much; but in many respects the aftermath was worse than the conflict itself.

All that one can safely say ten years after the tornado is that it swept aside many stabilities, values, habits of thought and feeling that were already being undermined by the skeptics of the old era and the prophets of the new. But on the surface, the world slipped back into its old grooves with an astonishing ease. People, principally in America, who had not been touched at all by the war hurried to forget their enthusiasm for it somewhat as spectators at a tragedy endeavour to hide their last cheers and tears when the curtain drops and the house-lights go on. "Back to normalcy" was only the reverse side of the coin of "let's forget." The spirit was a little bit that of a mob of small boys who tie a tin can to the tail of a cur, watch him run himself to death, and then go home bashfully or with bravado. The world was sick of its war, and quite fed-up, too, with its war veterans. The maimed, the crippled, the injured, the wounded heroes of a scant year ago, began to be looked on somewhat as a man looks at a scab on his skin. The religious enthusiasm of the assent had its reverse in the almost incredible cant of the denial.

These, of course, were the people who had not suffered or had actually profited, materially, by the war. They were more numerous in America than anywhere else; but in Europe, and principally in the defeated Central European powers, the decay or breakdown of old stabilities, the revolution, whether slow or sudden, had thrown a new class of people to the surfaces of money and power. During the four years of social unrest wishes had become horses, almost, as it were, overnight, and everywhere there were beggars who could ride. In Russia they could even go at a gallop, along what roads and to what final goals of achievement or destruction no one could possibly prophesy.

And yet a generation composed of millions of men, mostly young, mostly with hope and belief in their hearts, had marched

out to wounds, to death or to destruction. It was on them—on some of them at least—that the cynicism of the cry “let’s forget the war” broke with a sinister brutality more appalling than anything they had seen in the war itself. To those who could penetrate to the depths of that cynicism, stare it in the face, the world could never be the same again. At the front there had been comradeship, brutality, cowardice, bravery; naked things, but definite, in their way, as a man’s clenched fist. And at home there had been talk and Liberty drives and Victory drives and more talk. There had been hatred, principally on the part of idle people who for the first time in their lives had atrocities other than their neighbours’ to gossip about. There had been incredible pettiness and greed. There had been unbelievable speeches from pulpits, ghastly articles by the literary patriots in the magazines and editorial columns . . . a very human sort of thing, after all, but no sort of thing for men who had fought the war at the front. And in Paris the little Cato in broadcloth was still thundering at his associates assembled to “heal the wounds of the world,” *Germania delenda est*. It was not, one submits, a very happy spectacle. There were many who must have shared the awful feeling of numbness, of inconsequentiality, that followed the terrible homecoming from France. All that lay in the immediate past of bloodshed, of filth, of dirt and wounds, was a dream as against this final nightmare of disillusion. . . . “If ye break faith with us who die we shall not sleep . . .” And the world had broken faith with its maimed and dead too soon.

3

One would not, of course, be drawn to lost causes unless there were the bright possibility of exaggerating their hope. Similarly, one can look back on those days now and say what fools we were. “If each recruit in 1914 had been an à Kempis or a Rochefoucauld, he would have known that if you are to love mankind you must not expect too much from it,” C. E.

Montague notes in "Disenchantment." But the world is not philosophic, other than by occasional mood or whim, and stupidity is as much our portion as wisdom.

Besides, no play, however exaggerated, is ever funny to the actors in it, if only because they have rehearsed it too long; and the great drama of 1914-1918 left much to be desired even from the viewpoint of the spectator. Whatever its folly or lack of humour, the disenchantment was normal to the original illusion. What was strictly abnormal was the spectacle of nations slaughtering each other on a large scale with the most improved scientific devices. And the first protest was as genuine as any simple cry of horror.

On the intellectual side of it, Romain Rolland, surveying the scene from the safe austerity of his Swiss mountainside, scattered the kernels of his prophetic sentimentality to the doves of all nations. Here, as elsewhere, one might question M. Rolland's common sense, but never his sincerity. His "*Au dessus de la Mêlée*" is, to-day, one of the most curious of the anti-patriotic documents, a mixture of Rousseauistic loose thinking with jingoistic chatter relieved by an occasional ray of disinterested and objective thinking. But M. Rolland was too self-conscious about it all to be very useful. He might furnish pacifists and conscientious objectors of all nations with an occasional rallying cry, but between the lines of his writings one perceives that he was quite as much alarmed at his own predicament as at the downfall of the nations. In England, Mr. Wells remained Mr. Britling throughout; safely and sanely Mr. Britling. Pessimism, remorse, Great Hope, foreboding, prophesy flowed indifferently from his pen. In Germany, Leonhard Frank had gloomily foreboded catastrophe and gloomily fled. And by 1916, Henri Barbusse had completed "*Under Fire*" out of his reaction to the scenes of Verdun.

It was the first important book of any literature to show the lengths to which a man of imaginative nature might recoil from the actual scene of the war nightmare, and it had its German counterpart in Fritz von Unruh's unbalanced "*Way*

of Sacrifice," suppressed by no less an authority than the General staff itself. In the meantime, Andreas Latzko, lying sick at Davos in Switzerland had told what an Austrian officer might think of it in two books "Men at War" and "Women in the War." These are all works of direct observation with the war as the protagonist. And this very definite phase of war writing had its culmination in 1929 with the publication of Erich Maria Remarque's "All Quiet on the Western Front," the most ultimately disquieting of all war books yet written.

They were, one and all—these early books—anti-militarist documents; the point being not one of intention but, overpoweringly, one of unconscious reaction. No "sensitive soul" could possibly stand the full vision of war, at the front, in the trenches and dug-outs, without revolting from it. Even if the spirit were strong enough, the flesh was bound, sooner or later, to rebel or break down. Discounting actual or imaginary cases of shell-shock, the state of usefulness of a soldier, unwounded, exposed to the ordinary bombardments, that is, to the ordinary routine of life in the trenches and rest billets, might range from six to eight months. He might be able to stand the turmoil, the constant imminence of danger, the continued and prolonged spells of sleeplessness and exhaustion a few weeks longer without permanently damaging himself, if his nervous system in the first place were of the best. After that neurosis of some kind or other developed until he had recuperated; in other words, he ceased to think and function as a normal human being. The time limit, of course, varied with the quality of hardship he was exposed to—some sectors were quieter than others—but the results of any prolonged "exposure" to front line conditions even in the cases of hardy and healthy men were often disastrous.

We should not lose sight of this when reading the blood-red horrors of Latzko's "Men at War." The mind sensitive enough to render such impressions in detail could not, by the mere force of its nature, escape from rendering them as nightmares. What we read in Von Unruh's unstrung and ghastly

pages is as much the record of a shattered nervous system trying to balance its own sense of horror as it is a picture of the horror itself.

It is always the vision of the thing that one reads from the pages of a worthwhile book, never the thing itself; and one has only to read more deeply in war literature to see how, as the years slipped by and the actual scene grew remote, that vision altered and shifted. But the immediate emotional duress during the war years was terrific. Never before had so many minds and imaginations been simultaneously wrenched and torn, the dream of a new world to rise phoenix-like from the ashes of the old settled into the despondencies of an intermittent nightmare; and the bitter war aftermath increased the sense of shock. It may have been the protective wisdom of the world that chose to forget the war so quickly—that labelled it as madness and nightmare and tried to turn its eyes away to the future once more. But no one who was at the front when the news of the armistice was brought will remember the scenes there as anything else but a strange tragedy-comedy. The widest conceivable chasm of unbelief and disillusion divided those who had fought at the front and those who had warred at home. While the cities were blowing off the last remnants of their pent-up hysteria, the armies sat silently through the night on the frozen November earth; a silence not of calm but of utter unbelief and apathy. Bonfires were lit; rockets went up; the assurance of waking up in the morning, alive, was felt as a relief. No one really believed that the war was over, and only a very few seemed to care. War had called up into the grey, mud-covered hosts huddled under the lowering autumn skies a state of mind at the farthest remove from civilian passions and enthusiasms. The precious, formative years of character had been spent in turning millions of men into that highly specialized and anti-civilian being—the fighting man. If these men were to receive their due, they would have to be retrained and adjusted to peace again as they had been disciplined and adjusted to war. They had been gath-

ered in by an immense drag-net, from schools and colleges, from soft homes, from prairie hamlets, from the city streets and slums. They had trained their bodies to endure the fatigue of long marches, of winters in frozen holes in the ground, of living and killing under conditions as primitive as their ancestors of thousands of years ago. They had been forced to forget their old values and standards to make the new ones endurable. They would now be asked to forget this in turn, to return to their little box-holes and offices, their streets that were no longer the same, their friends who had not changed with them. That is the theme of Remarque's book, and that, it seems to the editor, is the war's least understood tragedy. . . . And now, gradually, these pent-up emotions, these adjustments and maladjustments, this enormous consciousness of nightmare and futility, these springs bent back and strained, began to function. The great nervous release of creative writing began to loosen the strain, all over the world.

It was like the ticking of many clocks in a room that had hitherto been filled with a heavy silence. One clock set off another. In ten years that room was full.

4

The war was over; but its consequences on the state of mind and on the literature which was its reflection had really barely begun. The intellectual revolt, excitedly stifled during the war years when propaganda was felt to be essential to every "cause," was now more or less the order of the day. In France, Romain Rolland might return from his Swiss retreat as unremarked by the general public as his writings addressed to the thinkers of the world had been when they appeared in Switzerland in 1915. He was forty-six years old when the war broke out, hence liable for duty; but the French public, as distinct from the French literary world, is not, as a rule, vindictive. To a weary nation, savagely chauvinistic and utterly exhausted by turn, he might even appear in the guise of a prudent man

where Pierre Loti, who had written such unctuously patriotic letters to the admiralty at the outset of the conflict offering an old man's courage, etc., might seem rather monotonous. Professor Loisy's "War and the Pope" and "War" written in 1916 were too scholarly to reach the general public. Many of the professional men of letters in Paris, like their compatriots in Germany, had, from the first set their independence of thought at the service of the government, either as a result of intimidation or through a feeling of genuine patriotism or both. The battle that ensued between the intellectuals on both sides would make, today, one of the most amusing chapters of war history, if there were not something a little painful in the spectacle of professional wisemen turning somersaults at the behest of politicians. The Academy of Moral Sciences, through its President, Henri Bergson, was the first, apparently, to announce that "struggle of civilization against the barbarians" which was to give the sound thinkers of both sides a chance to exploit their ingenuity. Germany was first at the guns to accuse France of the rape and violation of Belgium and Professor Karl Lamprecht seems to have been the first to call attention to the resemblance between the French armies and the Huns of Attila, which was later to be caught up by the whole allied side and flung back at the Germans. In the propaganda field, Germany was outdone from the start simply because the British controlled the cable lines and coloured the news to suit themselves, and the industry and perseverance of the French savants in opening perspectives on German terrorism could, therefore, find a world audience. The peak of professorial ingenuity was, perhaps, achieved by E. Perrier of the French Academy of Sciences who discovered a certain unmistakable resemblance between the skull of Bismarck and the skulls of a hitherto unknown race of Stone Men called the Allophyles, but German men of letters were racing their French brethren to a tie at the time, and no absurdity was too pronounced to be debarred from the Press.

Anatole France, who had offered his services from the first,

wisely forebore from making any too overt comment. André Gide, considering discretion the better part of valour for a man of military age, devoted himself to refugee work in Paris. Yet much had been written and published in France during the war years of a nature no whit less rebellious than Barbusse's "Under Fire." P. C. J. Bourget's "The Night Cometh" was contemporary with Jean des Vignes Rouge's "Bourru," and if in both the patriotic note is present, the voice of horror drowns it out. A host of inconspicuous and industrious scribblers could still fan the patriotic flame with the wind of the Great Illusion, but war diaries and letters from men at the front were leaving little doubt as to what soldiers were actually seeing and suffering. France, unlike America, and to a far greater degree than England, was too close to the theatre of conflict to permit any long standing disguise of its real nature. When the enemy is thundering at your gates and has tramped through your fields on and off for four years, it does not take a telescope or the glass eye of an editorial writer to see what is actually going on. Conscientious objectors and the inconspicuous lesser fry were hounded and bounced and tortured by the police to the edification of the mob which always needs its whipping boys, but the long hand of French justice wore the velvet glove where matters deeply controversial were concerned. Justice, when it can be satisfied by crucifying a carpenter's son between two thieves, seldom needs to go further afield, and for the rest the French jails were kept quite full enough to satisfy people that "steps were being taken." In the field of fiction, again, no new note was struck in Georges Duhamel's "Vie des Martyrs," and Roland Dorgeles' "Wooden Crosses," when they appeared toward the closing years, and if they did push back the goal for other French writers on war themes, still the pace had long since been set. It has not been greatly varied or accelerated since, which may account for the astonishing monotony of two score French war books, very few of which, with the exception of "Under Fire," have ever reached an international audience.

In Germany, the war had from the beginning created two

parties among the thinkers and writers. Gerhart Hauptmann had written his "Vaterlandslied," Dehmel sang "Heilige Flamme Glüh," as a call of the nation to arms and Ernst Lis-sauer is still remembered for his "Hymn of Hate against Eng-land." The "Address to the Civilized Nations," found its subscribers among such distinguished thinkers, artists and scientists as Eucken, Haeckel, Wundt, Südermann, Humper-dinck, Roentgen, Ostwald and Liebermann. Bruno Frank and the Austrian author, Wildgans, took on the appropriate patri-otic coloration early in the war as writers in France and Eng-land had done, but the young poet, Gerrit Engelke broke into revolutionary strains in his "Rhythmus des Neuen Europas." He fell in the great retreat during October, 1918, and died in an English field hospital. Rene Schickele, editor of "Weisse Blätter," had long since gathered around him an important group of anti-war writers, and Hermann Hesse's "Demian," was published under a pseudonym. Across the border, Karl Spitteler, the Swiss poet, was inveighing against the conflict, and Franz Masereel, the Belgian artist, was beginning his career with woodcuts for a Geneva newspaper. Leonhard Frank, who had been prosecuted following the publication of "Der Mensch ist Gut," in 1916 and who had made good his escape to Switzerland, returned, after the Armistice, something of a hero. The book had been brought out in Zurich in 1917. It was published by Kiepenheuer in Berlin during the Winter of 1919 and became a "best-seller" overnight. In the meantime, the old order had passed out of the picture; November, which began the troubled peace of the world, brought fresh conflict to Germany. Revolution marched the streets with red flags and machine-guns; the spectre of starvation haunted the houses of wealthy and poor alike; only the profiteers could drink to the new era with a confidence born of a full stomach and pocketbook. And the picture of a world in ruins was to permeate literature for some time to come.

In the theatre, Reinard Goering's "Seeschlacht" and "Scapa Flow" were anticipating the more vivid revolutionary effects

of Bert Brecht's "Trommeln in der Nacht." On the part of Germany's greatest writers there was a silence—a silence not unlike that which reigned in France and England for a while. Südermann had yet to be heard from. Heinrich and Thomas Mann had drawn close to the fringe of the Socialist-Democratic Party in essays looking to a future of reconstruction. Frank Thiess and Joseph Roth were beginning to make the weight of the younger writers felt in the vexed question of readjustment. But the first post-war outpourings were followed by a strange hiatus, until in 1927 Arnold Zweig broke the silence with "The Case of Sergeant Grischa," one of the solidest literary achievements that the World War has produced.

In England, where the return to peace conditions was effected without the chattering of revolutionary machine-guns and the echoing crash of bombs in the city streets, the forward-lookers had picked up the first steps of a new *danse macabre*. Mr. Wells was relishing his vision of the world in ruins as he had never, properly, been able to enjoy the war itself. In a few years the rats and wolves would be gnawing at us all, unless the school teachers and intellectuals came to the rescue. J. M. Keynes, more straightforwardly, set the key for the politico-economic rebellion in his "Economic Consequences of the Peace." His analysis of the personalities of the council of four was a master-piece of literary irony. Arnold Bennett, W. L. George, John Galsworthy, had all caught at varying refractions of the conflagration and had given the realities of war life at home a certain dignity and value. William McFee sensibly contributed to the cause of peace—or of bigger and brighter wars—in a very early book "Six Hour Shift." Francis Brett Young had taken the promise of his early literary abilities along with his doctor's degree to East Africa with him, and had painted vividly the war in the bush. In poetry, the thin, silver call to higher hope had died with Rupert Brooke, although the mild verses of Thomas Hardy reiterated the patriotic wistfulness of the stay-at-homes. As in Germany, the young war poets were pressing to the fore to fix the scene in

the glamour of their stark disillusion. The nightmare lines run riotous across the page. One could not speak one's mind, perhaps, but one could think one's thoughts and brood over the terrible dream—take notes on the margin, as it were, of the thing itself. The sedate levels of the wistful Masefield were deluged slowly in the oncoming waves of sound and fury. Siegfried Sassoon's coloured and fevered outcries were echoed, more soberly, by the heavy refrains of Robert Graves, Edmund Blunden and Richard Aldington, and Wilfred Owen died, leaving one of the few poetic legacies of any importance to the world, with the Great War as its theme. In fiction, again England had produced at least one good war book during the early years of conflict. It was Hugh Walpole's "Dark Forest," published in 1916. Russia was busily quarrelling with herself in the name of revolution and progress while Italy, too conscious of coming storm clouds to watch the literary horizon, observed a certain reticence on matters pertaining to the war. But Prezzolini's anthology of Soldier's Letters, "Tutta La Guerra," had been published to point out in some detail what the common people thought of it all. Soffici's "Kobilek" and Monelli's "Scarpe al Sole" are both additions of importance to the world's war works. And Borgese's "Rube," dealing with the unhappy aftermath, was soon to unwind laborious coils in English translation.

5

Such was the scene abroad, while at home we were returning to normalcy and enjoying such revelations of Hun horrors and Allied manliness as were still being dispensed in the prescriptions of Mary Roberts Rinehart and Vicente Blasco Ibañez. It was an attitude, which, since it had become a matter of pride and presidential elections, was more than resistant to such foreign importations as pretended to show the war in its true colours. The desire to forget the war was tantamount to admitting that the American coals had been carried to New-

GERMANY GOES TO WAR

FROM

"CLASS OF 1902" BY ERNST GLAESER

(Translated by Willa and Edwin Muir)

We left by train that very night. My uncle the confectioner booked a compartment for us and accompanied us to Solothurn. On the way he told us that everything had come very unexpectedly; nobody knew who was really to blame. Probably whoever lost the war; that was always the way. My mother was silent. I thought of Gaston and closed my eyes.

At Solothurn my uncle took his leave. He had to go back into the mountains, along with the rest of the officers, to see that the frontiers were secured. He was in great spirits at the prospect. He was an enthusiastic mountaineer and an ardent nature-lover.

As we got into the train the porter, who had received a substantial tip from my mother, declared that Germany would certainly win. On the platform were standing a group of Austrians who had worked as waiters in West Switzerland, and now, burning with ardour, were returning to their Fatherland to take revenge on the Serbs. They sang, "God maintain our Franz the Emperor," and had taken off their jackets. At last it had come, they shouted. They did not mean the train, which had just come in, but the war.

An elderly gentleman was sitting in our compartment. He began to talk to us at once, as if we were intimate acquaintances. On the back of his hotel bill he had added up the numerical strength of the European armies and balanced them against each other. He compared the two totals and assured my mother that the spiritual qualities of the German troops com-

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pensated for the numerical superiority of the Russians. For in this war spiritual qualities alone would decide the day, and Germany's spiritual qualities were the best in Europe. As a university professor he knew that our youth were ready for the fray, and full of ideals. At last the hour had come when our people could enter on its great world mission. He himself had been almost cast into despair by the crass materialism of the last few years—particularly in the lower classes; but at last life had regained an ideal significance. The great virtues of humanity, which had found their last refuge in Germany—fidelity, patriotism, readiness to die for an idea—these were triumphing now over the trading and shopkeeping spirit. This was the providential lightning flash that would clear the air; after it a new German people would arise whose victory would save the world from mediocrity, brutalizing materialism, western democracy and false humanitarianism. He could see a new world, ruled and directed by a race of aristocrats, who would root out all signs of degeneracy and lead humanity back again to the deserted peaks of the eternal ideals. Those who were too weak must perish by the wayside. The war would cleanse mankind from all its impurities. The future belonged to Siegfried; in this war Hagen would be slain.

The professor talked very gently; the light was reflected from his glasses. My mother, sitting opposite him, listened attentively. With her lips she silently repeated many of his phrases after him. For the first time she began to take some interest in the war. Perhaps because the man was a professor, perhaps because all that he said sounded so clever, perhaps because it had nothing to do with politics—at any rate when, as we neared Basle, the professor foretold that the war would give a mighty impetus to art, she capitulated to his logic. She believed in the war as she would have believed in a new poet. As we got out at the Basle station she said to me that a great time was before us.

The professor walked beside us. His face was grey and covered with an irregular stubble of hair. His shoulders looked feeble and were drawn up. Every now and then he sucked at

his teeth with his tongue, as if he were dislodging decayed scraps of food that stuck between them. He limped. I did not understand his enthusiasm for Siegfried.

When he made his name known to my mother, she whispered to me that he was a famous man. I must carry his bag.

The waiting-room was crammed. A telegram flew from hand to hand telling that Germany had declared war on Russia. On account of our brothers in Austria.

The *Wacht am Rhein* was sung and the Song of the Flags. The professor joined in the singing, my mother as well. I was afraid of so much joy, for I could not help thinking of Gaston. If Gaston had been there I would gladly have sung too.

"Do you see the people," said the professor to my mother, "how uplifted they are and how united? Does not that in itself justify the war?" He pointed to the waiting-room, which rang with songs and shouting. The men were shouting "brother" across to one another and went about shaking hands, although few of them were acquainted. Many of them were workmen. One could recognize them by their caps. They had come from Switzerland, from Italy, from France, where they had been working on machines. They went from table to table and fraternized with rich townspeople who had just come from holidaying in the mountains. In a corner sat a man of Jewish appearance along with two frightened daughters; he kept on treating the workmen to beer, and when they sang he sang too. "We're all brothers!" shouted the workmen; the gentleman nodded rapturously and paid.

"Is it not wonderful?" said the professor. "All our social divisions have vanished."

My mother nodded. She said something about "mass emotion."

"This war," answered the professor, "is an unparalleled aesthetic experience. For the first time I have seen the soul of the people laid bare." I sat with my lemonade in front of me and still thought of Gaston. Would he be singing too? . . ."

It was three o'clock in the morning when someone sprang on

to a table and shouted that the frontier was closed. A howl, as if they all felt betrayed, was the answer. "We must get home! We must join our brothers!" Then they sang again. The professor said that he would march over the frontier on foot, if no more trains were going. What should he do here in Switzerland? It was only a neutral country.

When towards six o'clock a Swiss official announced that they had managed to get together a train which, as the absolutely last one, would leave in twenty minutes, the whole station broke into jubilation, as if we were all going to a festival.

The train was rushed. We lost the professor in the confusion. We sat down on our bags in the corridor. My mother said it did not matter; we should have to make sacrifices now. Shortly after leaving Basle we came in sight of the Rhine. Everybody rushed to the windows. The men uncovered their heads, the women leaned tenderly on their husbands' shoulders. They sang solemnly and gravely, as if they were in church. Many had tears in their eyes. And the children, who stood apart by themselves in the corridors, gazed in silent wonder at the strange solemnity of the grownups.

At Mülheim we saw the first German soldiers. They wore new uniforms of grey-green cloth, and over their helmets was a protective covering of the same material. The railway embankment was guarded by soldiers. Every hundred yards there was a sentry, and on the bridges there were patrols. They were greeted with storms of cheering. "*Die Wacht am Rhein*," cried the women and threw them fruit, cigarettes and chocolate. The soldiers waved their rifles; some kissed their hands. These were officers. . . .

Flags fluttered over the roofs of the villages. The colours of harvest, the yellow and red, gleamed heavy and languid in the soft morning light as we passed through Brandenburg. They fluttered over the huts in the vineyards, they billowed from the belfries of churches and the chimneys of farmhouses, they filled the stations with colour, they almost covered the schools, and the children waved them as they stood behind the

barriers and shouted "Hurrah!" Yellow and red. Wheat and poppies. The air smelt of them.

As we neared Freiburg, the whole train was singing. We all knew one another. Strangers shared their food together, exchanged cigarettes, presented the children with chocolate. The children were a little afraid, for they had never seen so many good people before.

I stood beside my mother at the window and did not dare to move. I thought I was dreaming. A single movement, I thought, might destroy this dream, and the people would become as indifferent or as hostile to one another as before. I held my breath and implored God to keep the miracle from coming to an end.

I did not think any longer of Gaston. The flags and the singing closed me in. My mother kissed me, strange men lifted me on their shoulders, strange ladies gave me chocolate and stroked my hair, young girls talked to me as if I were their brother—I was giddy with this incomprehensible human love.

When we drew into Freiburg, the platform was thronged with shouting people. Students in fantastic jackets sprang into the train singing. Through the open windows they kissed girls who showered flowers upon them. Elderly gentlemen had fastened little flags to their canes and carried them over their shoulders. Presents were being showered on soldiers, whose rifles were trimmed with sprays of roses as if they were all celebrating their birthday. Even the waiters in the station restaurant looked cheerful and the porters springing from the carriages laughed like benevolent uncles.

On the opposite side of the platform stood a long red transport train. In the wide-open door of the cattle trucks the laughing round faces of the soldiers hung like clusters of brown fruit. The cars waved with banners and sprays of foliage, the sides were covered with drawings in chalk. Gay groups of white-clad girls ran up to the soldiers and stuck flowers in their tunics. Before a second-class carriage in the middle of the train, where the officers walked up and down in

their fine uniforms and shining leather gaiters, a military band was playing light marches and cheerful folk-songs. When a handsome soldier seized one of the white-clad girls round the waist and gave her a resounding kiss clean on the mouth, the whole station roared "Hurrah!" New military transports kept rolling in. Even the cannons on the flat-cars were adorned with flowers and green branches. On the officers' carriage were stuck complete little birch trees, hung with brilliant ribbons, and sometimes with sausages. Everybody was laughing, the soldiers loudest of all.

Were they going on a holiday or to a festival?

As our train drew out and slowly left the station behind, the military band struck up: *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*. Deep-throated the crowd joined in, like a choral the song mounted in the clear, sunny air fluttering with banners; all took their hats off, the officers saluted elegantly, the soldiers presented arms, the young girls sang in voices as clear as their white frocks, the students shook hands, the women laid their arms tenderly round the shoulders of their husbands, and the faster the train went the louder and higher rose the singing. I was swallowed up, submerged in the singing. I could not distinguish things any longer. It was to me as if I had a thousand mothers and a thousand fathers. . . .

Then my mother bent over me, her hair brushed my cheek, and she whispered in my ear, her voice choked with emotion: "Isn't it wonderful?" I flung my arms round her. She drew me to her. "Yes," she said and nodded towards the people in the corridors standing close together like lovers, serene and happy. "Our dear German people, how terribly we have misunderstood their real nature." She was crying. A little in front of us beside the lavatory the students were singing: "No better death in all the world, than on the field to perish. . . ."

The train rolled between the rich pastures of Baden, heavy with grain. From all the towns rose shouts of rejoicing.

I was dazzled. The world lay transfigured. The war had made everything beautiful.

THE BIRTH OF THE FRENCH SOLDIER

FROM

"THE POILUS" BY JOSEPH DELTEIL

(Translated by Jacques Le Clercq)

On August 1st, France became a railway-station. Every hill sheltered a train, every village a station. From Brest to Nice and from Dunkerque to Bordeaux, it was but one immense train. Everyone took the train; the territorials along the roadbeds, the conscripts on the railroads. The brains of the General Staff were bowed over coaches and tunnels. The spirit of mothers travelled over rails.

Over the Breton moor, between the calvaries, jerk-water trains alive with Breton hats rolled by amid the noise of oceans. The Basque lines were filled with *bérets*. The Central Mountains unloaded the oats of Auvergne across the cabbage-fields. Along the Mediterranean crept the little trains of the Midi, dripping tenors and wine. In the sunlight, through the fog, France was mobilizing her children. Every corner sent forth its handsomest youngsters (for Death, that female, likes handsome youngsters), every plot of ground its fairest flower (for the Skeleton delights in flowers). The villages gave up their village-bantams and the farms their tall light lads. All France robbed herself of her blood, sending it in reservoir-coaches in the direction of the blood-factories. Cards were shuffled, drawn, and the top of the basket was for Death. Death reserved for herself the finest portion of life. In front of hedges of territorials, the supreme lads filed by, the essence of the nation, its joy and its flower, its most favored substance, its choicest dream!

These tall lads, red with health, dazzled by the wide world and by long journeys, laughing with all their heart, clad in their

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coarse Sunday best, these handsome lads covered with girls' kisses and the skins of angels, hot with journeymanship and wine, cast loose with their heedlessness and their sacks full of ham for the adventure in the depths of space: what a *gorgeous* vision of life!

All of it poured into Paris. The Gare de l'Est was the station of France. Amid the turmoil of the world's great fever, the mobilized ate their lunch on platforms ashine with oil. They sat on the steps of coaches, on the bloodless ballasting, in a deluge of sardine-cans and good humour, their boots on their cheeses and a litre of wine close to their hearts, in a flash of knives and of teeth, jovial and bantering, gentle and violent, with their large hands and their large eyes. They called to each other from the Ardèche to Caen in racy terms of the soil; they ate with relish amid a din of ribaldries. A fragrance of food rose towards a sky rich with sunlight. A phantasmagoria danced a saraband in the sun rays. The sons of the plow and of the shop, the sons of the people, free from tool-bearing and bread-winning, laughed in an atmosphere of liberty under the guard of a corporal. No more worries, rain and hay; no more bosses and no more work; but all around them a great life, empty and new; a row of Paris urchins, dirty from birth; a universe of beautiful locomotives, of houses with fine façades, of whistles—that vulgar luxury and that smell of cities that debase the heart of men, of beautiful women wherever they come from. . . .

The world had broken her shell and the almond of life was bare. That mob of young males, their bellies in the throes of digestion, ogled the girls of Paris under a radiant sky, and meditated on some base paradise.

"It's like a swell brothel!" said one of them.

At night the Gare de l'Est assumed an incomparable exterior and incomparable proportions. All this vaguely circular space, raised by sighs and roaring, this coming-and-going of enchanted machines in the smoothest directions; those whistles, that might be sounds or colors; and all that illumination in

three tones, blue, green, red, laid out with a fine disorder by some mute artist; and that interclashing of steel curves, softer in their obscure mass than the slope of hips; that impression of intelligent mystery, of heavenly coördination; that vision of mechanics and of spatial geometry,—there lay a semi-divine spectacle, a true and mighty dream!

Throughout this period, Paris was under pressure. Puissant virtues of patriotism, born deep down beneath the skulls of men, burst through and spilled out over the public squares and boulevards. To Berlin! To Berlin! The word *Berlin* filled Paris. Detachments passed, and every rifle owned the right to a flower, and every soldier owned the right to a kiss. Women softened at sight. Their dresses could no longer contain their hearts. They felt a thousand obligations of love in themselves. They distributed their lips to those young men in arms with the pride of priestesses. A kind of brotherhood like that of flowers, a white sentimental friendship, a universal innocence fell upon every creature. *Le mal*, the notion of evil—and *le mâle*, the male—disappeared. They were all children, angels. For a few days, France was Paradise on earth.

On about August 9th, news came of the French offensive in Alsace. The Army of Belfort attacked on August 7th. The same day, Bonneau's Brigade (7th Army Corps) won the first battle of the campaign at Altkirch. On August 8th, the French troops entered Mulhouse, all their bugles to windward, amid the enthusiasm of Alsace. Suddenly, every Frenchman felt his chest expand—wider for the whole of Alsace. . . .

FIRST NEWS

FROM

"NOTES ON LIFE AND LETTERS" BY JOSEPH CONRAD

. . . The session of the University was ended and the students were either all gone or going home to different parts of Poland, but the professors had not all departed yet on their respective holidays, and amongst them the tone of scepticism prevailed generally. Upon the whole there was very little inclination to talk about the possibility of a war. Nationally, the Poles felt that from their point of view there was nothing to hope from it. "Whatever happens," said a very distinguished man to me, "we may be certain that it's *our* skins which will pay for it as usual." A well-known literary critic and writer on economical subjects said to me: "War seems a material impossibility, precisely because it would mean the complete ruin of all material interest." . . .

Next day the librarian of the University invited me to come and have a look at the library which I had not seen since I was 14 years old. It was from him that I learned that the greater part of my father's MSS. was preserved there. He confessed that he had not looked them through thoroughly yet, but he told me that there was a lot of very important letters bearing on the epoch from '60 to '63, to and from many prominent Poles of that time; and he added: "There is a bundle of correspondence that will appeal to you personally. Those are letters written by your father to an intimate friend in whose papers they were found. They contain many references to yourself, though you couldn't have been more than four years old at the time. Your father seems to have been extremely interested in his son." That afternoon I went to the University,

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taking with me *my* eldest son. The attention of that young Englishman was mainly attracted by some relics of Copernicus in a glass case. I saw the bundle of letters and accepted the kind proposal of the librarian that he should have them copied for me during the holidays. In the range of the deserted vaulted rooms lined with books, full of august memories, and in the passionless silence of all this enshrined wisdom, we walked here and there talking of the past, the great historical past in which lived the inextinguishable spark of national life; and all around us the centuries-old buildings lay still and empty, composing themselves to rest after a year of work on the minds of another generation.

No echo of the German ultimatum to Russia penetrated that academical peace. But the news had come. When we stepped into the street out of the deserted main quadrangle, we three, I imagine, were the only people in the town who did not know of it. My boy and I parted from the librarian (who hurried home to pack up for his holiday) and walked on to the hotel, where we found my wife actually in the car waiting for us to take a run of some ten miles to the country house of an old school-friend of mine. He had been my greatest chum. In my wanderings about the world I had heard that his later career both at school and at the University had been of extraordinary brilliance—in classics, I believe. But in this, the iron-grey moustache period of his life, he informed me with badly concealed pride that he had gained world fame as the Inventor—no, Inventor is not the word—Producer, I believe would be the right term—of a wonderful kind of beetroot seed. The beet grown from this seed contained more sugar to the square inch—or was it to the square root?—than any kind of beet. He exported this seed, not only with profit (and even to the United States), but with a certain amount of glory which seemed to have gone slightly to his head. There is a fundamental strain of agriculturist in a Pole which no amount of brilliance, even classical, can destroy. While we were having tea outside, looking down the lovely slope of the gardens at the

view of the city in the distance, the possibilities of the war faded from our minds. Suddenly my friend's wife came to us with a telegram in her hand and said calmly: "General mobilisation, do you know?" We looked at her like men aroused from a dream. "Yes," she insisted, "they are already taking the horses out of the ploughs and carts." I said: "We had better go back to town as quick as we can," and my friend assented with a troubled look: "Yes, you had better." As we passed through villages on our way back we saw mobs of horses assembled on the commons with soldiers guarding them, and groups of villagers looking on silently at the officers with their note-books checking deliveries and writing out receipts. Some old peasant women were already weeping aloud.

When our car drew up at the door of the hotel, the manager himself came to help my wife out. In the first moment I did not quite recognise him. His luxuriant black locks were gone, his head was closely cropped, and as I glanced at it he smiled and said: "I shall sleep at the barracks to-night."

I cannot reproduce the atmosphere of that night, the first night after mobilisation. The shops and the gateways of the houses were of course closed, but all through the dark hours the town hummed with voices; the echoes of distant shouts entered the open windows of our bedroom. Groups of men talking noisily walked in the middle of the roadway escorted by distressed women; men of all callings and of all classes going to report themselves at the fortress. Now and then a military car tooting furiously would whisk through the streets empty of wheeled traffic, like an intensely black shadow under the great flood of electric lights on the grey pavement.

But what produced the greatest impression on my mind was a gathering at night in the coffee-room of my hotel of a few men of mark whom I was asked to join. It was about one o'clock in the morning. The shutters were up. For some reason or other the electric light was not switched on, and the big room was lit up only by a few tall candles, just enough for us to see each other's faces by. I saw in those faces the awful desolation of

men whose country, torn in three, found itself engaged in the contest with no will of its own and not even the power to assert itself at the cost of life. All the past was gone, and there was no future, whatever happened; no road which did not seem to lead to moral annihilation. I remember one of those men addressing me after a period of mournful silence compounded of mental exhaustion and unexpressed forebodings.

"What do you think England will do? If there is a ray of hope anywhere it is only there."

I said: "I believe I know what England will do" (this was before the news of the violation of Belgium neutrality arrived), "though I won't tell you, for I am not absolutely certain. But I can tell you what I am absolutely certain of. It is this: If England comes into the war, then, no matter who may want to make peace at the end of six months at the cost of right and justice, England will keep on fighting for years if necessary. You may reckon on that."

"What, even alone?" asked somebody across the room.

I said: "Yes, even alone. But if things go so far as that England will not be alone."

I think that at that moment I must have been inspired.

London, August 5, 1914

ANNOUNCEMENT ISSUED AT THE FOREIGN
OFFICE AT 12:15 A. M.

Owing to the summary rejection by the German Government of the request made by His Majesty's Government for assurances that the neutrality of Belgium would be respected, His Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin has received his passports, and His Majesty's Government has declared to the German Government that a state of war exists between Great Britain and Germany as from 11 P. M. on August 4.

MR. BRITLING LOOKS AT WAR

FROM

"MR. BRITLING SEES IT THROUGH" BY H. G. WELLS

Mr. Britling started for his moonlight ride about half-past nine that night. He announced that he could neither rest nor work, the war had thrown him into a fever; the driving of the automobile was just the distraction he needed; he might not, he added casually, return for a day or so. When he felt he could work again he would come back. He filled up his petrol tank by the light of an electric torch, and sat in his car in the garage and studied his map of the district. His thoughts wandered from the road to Pyecrafts to the coast, and to the possible route of a raider. Suppose the enemy anticipated a declaration of war! Here he might come, and here. . . .

He roused himself from these speculations to the business in hand.

The evening seemed as light as day, a cool moonshine filled the world. The road was silver that flushed to pink at the approach of Mr. Britling's headlight, the dark turf at the wayside and the bushes on the bank became for a moment an acid green as the glare passed. The full moon was climbing up the sky, and so bright that scarcely a star was visible in the blue grey of the heavens. Houses gleamed white a mile away, and ever and again a moth would flutter and hang in the light of the lamps, and then vanish again in the night.

Gladys was in excellent condition for a run, and so was Mr. Britling. He went neither fast nor slow, and with a quite unfamiliar confidence. Life, which had seemed all day a congested confusion darkened by threats, became cool, mysterious and aloof and with a quality of dignified reassurance.

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He steered along the narrow road by the black dogrose hedge, and so into the high road towards the village. The village was alight at several windows but almost deserted. Out beyond, a coruscation of lights burnt like a group of topaz and rubies set in the silver shield of the night. The festivities of the Flower Show were still in full progress, and the reduction of the entrance fee after seven had drawn in every lingering outsider. The roundabouts churned out their relentless music, and the bottle-shooting galleries popped and crashed. The well-patronized ostriches and motorcars flickered round in a pulsing rhythm; black, black, black, before the naphtha flares.

Mr. Britling pulled up at the side of the road, and sat for a little while watching the silhouettes move hither and thither from shadow to shadow across the bright spaces.

"On the very brink of war—on the brink of Armageddon," he whispered at last. "Do they understand? Do any of us understand?"

He slipped in his gear to starting, and was presently running quietly with his engine purring almost inaudibly along the level road to Hartleytree. The sounds behind him grew smaller and smaller, and died away leaving an immense unruffled quiet under the moon. There seemed no motion but his own, no sound but the neat, subdued, mechanical rhythm in front of his feet. Presently he ran out into the main road, and heedless of the lane that turned away towards Pyecrafts, drove on smoothly towards the east and the sea. Never before had he driven by night. He had expected a fumbling and tedious journey; he found he had come into an undreamt-of silvery splendour of motion. For it seemed as though even the automobile was running on moonlight that night. . . . Pyecrafts could wait. Indeed the later he got to Pyecrafts the more moving and romantic the little comedy of reconciliation would be. And he was in no hurry for that comedy. He felt he wanted to apprehend this vast summer calm about him, that alone of all things of the day seemed to convey anything whatever of the majestic tragedy that was happening to mankind. As one

slipped through this still vigil one could imagine for the first time the millions away there marching, the wide river valleys, villages, cities, mountain-ranges, ports and seas inaudibly busy.

"Even now," he said, "the battleships may be fighting."

He listened, but the sound was only the low intermittent drumming of his cylinders as he ran with his throttle nearly closed, down a stretch of gentle hill.

He felt that he must see the sea. He would follow the road beyond the Rodwell villages, and then turn up to the crest of Eastonbury Hill. And thither he went and saw in the gap of the low hills beyond a V-shaped level of moonlit water that glittered and yet lay still. He stopped his car by the roadside, and sat for a long time looking at this and musing. And once it seemed to him three little shapes like short black needles passed in line ahead across the molten silver.

But that may have been just the straining of the eyes. . . .

All sorts of talk had come to Mr. Britling's ears about the navies of England and France and Germany; there had been public disputes of experts, much whispering and discussion in private. We had the heavier vessels, the bigger guns, but it was not certain that we had the preëminence in science and invention. Were they relying as we were relying on Dreadnoughts, or had they their secrets and surprises for us? Tonight, perhaps, the great ships were steaming to conflict. . . .

Tonight all over the world ships must be in flight and ships pursuing; ten thousand towns must be ringing with the immediate excitement of war. . . .

Only a year ago Mr. Britling had been lunching on a battleship and looking over its intricate machinery. It had seemed to him then that there could be no better human stuff in the world than the quiet, sunburnt, disciplined men and officers he had met. . . . And our little army, too, must be gathering tonight, the little army that had been chastened and reborn in South Africa, that he was convinced was individually more gallant and self-reliant and capable than any other army in the world. He would have sneered or protested if he had heard another

Englishman say that, but in his heart he held the dear belief. . . .

And what other aviators in the world could fly as the Frenchmen and Englishmen he had met once or twice at Eastchurch and Salisbury could fly? These are things of race and national quality. Let the German cling to his gasbags. "We shall beat them in the air," he whispered. "We shall beat them on the seas. Surely we shall beat them on the seas. If we have men enough and guns enough we shall beat them on land. . . . Yet ——— For years they have been preparing. . . ."

There was little room in the heart of Mr. Britling that night for any love but the love of England. He loved England now as a nation of men. There could be no easy victory. Good for us with our too easy natures that there could be no easy victory. But victory we must have now—or perish. . . .

He roused himself with a sigh, restarted his engine, and went on to find some turning place. He still had a colourless impression that the journey's end was Pycrafts.

"We must all do the thing we can," he thought, and for a time the course of his automobile along a winding down-hill road held his attention so that he could not get beyond it. He turned about and ran up over the hill again and down long slopes inland, running very softly and smoothly with his lights devouring the road ahead and sweeping the banks and hedges beside him, and as he came down a little hill through a village he heard a confused clatter and jingle of traffic ahead, and saw the danger triangle that warns of cross-roads. He slowed down and then pulled up abruptly.

Riding across the gap between the cottages was a string of horsemen, and then a grey cart, and then a team drawing a heavy object—a gun, and then more horsemen, and then a second gun. It was all a dim brown procession in the moonlight. A mounted officer came up beside him and looked at him and then went back to the cross-roads, but as yet England was not troubling about spies. Four more guns passed, and then a string of carts and more mounted men, sitting stiffly. Nobody was

singing or shouting; scarcely a word was audible, and through all the column there was an effect of quiet efficient haste. And so they passed, and rumbled and jingled and clattered out of the scene, leaving Mr. Britling in his car in the dreaming village. He restarted his engine once more, and went his way thoughtfully.

He went so thoughtfully that presently he missed the road to Pyecrafts—if ever he had been on the road to Pyecrafts at all—altogether. He found himself upon a highway running across a flattish plain, and presently discovered by the sight of the Great Bear, faint but traceable in the blue overhead, that he was going due north. Well, presently he would turn south and west; that in good time; now he wanted to feel; he wanted to think. How could he best help England in the vast struggle for which the empty silence and beauty of this night seemed to be waiting? But indeed he was not thinking at all, but feeling, feeling wonder, as he had never felt it since his youth had passed from him. This war might end nearly everything in the world as he had known the world; that idea struggled slowly through the moonlight into consciousness, and won its way to dominance in his mind.

The character of the road changed; the hedges fell away, the pine trees and pine woods took the place of the black squat shapes of the hawthorn and oak and apple. The houses grew rarer and the world emptier and emptier, until he could have believed that he was the only man awake and out-of-doors in all the slumbering land. . . .

For a time a little thing caught hold of his dreaming mind. Continually as he ran on, black, silent birds rose startled out of the dust of the road before him, and fluttered noiselessly beyond his double wedge of light. What sort of birds could they be? Were they night-jars? Were they different kinds of birds snatching at the quiet of the night for a dust bath in the sand? This little independent thread of inquiry ran through the texture of his mind and died away. . . .

And at one place there was a great bolting of rabbits across the road, almost under his wheels. . . .

The phrases he had used that afternoon at Claverings came back presently into his head. They were, he felt assured, the phrases that had to be said now. This war could be seen as the noblest of wars, as the crowning struggle of mankind against national dominance and national aggression; or else it was a mere struggle of nationalities and pure destruction and catastrophe. Its enormous significances, he felt, must not be lost in any petty bickering about the minor issues of the conflict. But were these enormous significances being stated clearly enough? Were they being understood by the mass of liberal and pacific thinkers? He drove more and more slowly as these questions crowded upon his attention until at last he came to a stop altogether. . . . "Certain things must be said clearly," he whispered. "Certain things — The meaning of England. . . . The deep and long-unspoken desire for kindness and fairness. . . . Now is the time for speaking. It must be put as straight now as her gun-fire, as honestly as the steering of her ships."

Phrases and paragraphs began to shape themselves in his mind as he sat with one arm on his steering-wheel.

Suddenly he roused himself, turned over the map in the map-case beside him, and tried to find his position. . . .

So far as he could judge he had strayed into Suffolk. . . .

About one o'clock in the morning he found himself in Newmarket. Newmarket too was a moonlit emptiness, but as he hesitated at the cross-roads he became aware of a policeman standing quite stiff and still at the corner by the church.

"Matching's Easy?" he cried.

"That road, Sir, until you come to Market Saffron, and then to the left. . . ."

Mr. Britling had a definite purpose now in his mind, and he drove faster, but still very carefully and surely. He was already within a mile or so of Market Saffron before he remembered that he had made a kind of appointment with himself at Pyecrafts. He stared at two conflicting purposes. He turned over certain possibilities.

At the Market Saffron cross-roads he slowed down, and for a moment he hung undecided.

"Oliver," he said, and as he spoke he threw over his steering-wheel towards the homeward way. . . . He finished his sentence when he had negotiated the corner safely. "Oliver must have her. . . ."

And then, perhaps fifty yards farther along, and this time almost indignantly: "She ought to have married him long ago. . . ."

He put his automobile in the garage, and then went round under the black shadow of his cedars to the front door. He had no key and for a time he failed to rouse his wife by flinging pebbles and gravel at her half-open window. But at last he heard her stirring and called out to her.

He explained he had returned because he wanted to write. He wanted indeed to write quite urgently. He went straight up to his room, lit his reading-lamp, made himself some tea, and changed into his nocturnal suit. Daylight found him still writing very earnestly at his pamphlet. The title he had chosen was: "And Now War Ends."

A FRENCHMAN SEES THE WAR

FROM

"CLERAMBAULT" BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

(Translated by Katherine Miller)

Agénor Clerambault sat under an arbour in his garden at St. Prix, reading to his wife and children an ode that he had just written, dedicated to Peace, ruler of men and things, "Ara Pacis Augustae." In it he wished to celebrate the near approach of universal brotherhood. It was a July evening; a last rosy light lay on the tree-tops, and through the luminous haze, like a veil over the slopes of the hillside and the grey plain of the distant city, the windows on Montmartre burned like sparks of gold. Dinner was just over. Clerambault leaned across the table where the dishes yet stood, and as he spoke his glance full of simple pleasure passed from one to the other of his three auditors, sure of meeting the reflection of his own happiness.

His wife Pauline followed the flight of his thought with difficulty. After the third phrase anything read aloud made her feel drowsy, and the affairs of her household took on an absurd importance; one might say that the voice of the reader made them chirp like birds in a cage. It was in vain that she tried to follow on Clerambault's lips, and even to imitate with her own, the words whose meaning she no longer understood; her eye mechanically noted a hole in the cloth, her fingers picked at the crumbs on the table, her mind flew back to a troublesome bill, till as her husband's eye seemed to catch her in the act, hastily snatching at the last words she had heard, she went into raptures over a fragment of verse,—for she could never quote poetry accurately. "What was that, Agénor? Do repeat that

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last line. How beautiful it is." Little Rose, her daughter, frowned, and Maxime, the grown son, was annoyed and said impatiently: "You are always interrupting, Mamma!"

Clerambault smiled and patted his wife's hand affectionately. He had married her for love when he was young, poor, and unknown, and together they had gone through years of hardship. She was not quite on his intellectual level and the difference did not diminish with advancing years, but Clerambault loved and respected his helpmate, and she strove, without much success, to keep step with her great man of whom she was so proud. He was extraordinarily indulgent to her. His was not a critical nature—which was a great help to him in life in spite of innumerable errors of judgment; but as these were always to the advantage of others, whom he saw at their best, people laughed but liked him. He did not interfere with their money hunt and his countrified simplicity was refreshing to the world-weary, like a wild-growing thicket in a city square.

Maxime was amused by all this, knowing what it was worth. He was a good-looking boy of nineteen with bright laughing eyes, and in the Parisian surroundings he had been quick to acquire the gift of rapid, humorous observation, dwelling on the outside view of men and things more than on ideas. Even in those he loved, nothing ridiculous escaped him, but it was without ill-nature. Clerambault smiled at the youthful impertinence which did not diminish Maxime's admiration for his father but rather added to its flavour. A boy in Paris would tweak the Good Lord by the beard, by way of showing affection!

Rosine was silent according to her habit; it was not easy to know her thoughts as she listened, bent forward, her hands folded and her arms leaning on the table. Some natures seem made to receive, like the earth which opens itself silently to every seed. Many seeds fall and remain dormant; none can tell which will bring forth fruit. The soul of the young girl was of this kind; her face did not reflect the words of the reader as

did Maxime's mobile features, but the slight flush on her cheek and the moist glance of her eyes under their drooping lids showed inward ardour and feeling. She looked like those Florentine pictures of the Virgin stirred by the magical salutation of the Archangel. Clerambault saw it all and as he glanced around his little circle his eye rested with special delight on the fair bending head which seemed to feel his look.

On this July evening these four people were united in a bond of affection and tranquil happiness of which the central point was the father, the idol of the family.

Clerambault had just finished with a Schilleresque vision of the fraternal joys promised in the future. Maxime, carried away by his enthusiasm in spite of his sense of humour, had given the orator a round of applause all by himself. Pauline noisily asked if Agénor had not heated himself in speaking, and amid the excitement Rosine silently pressed her lips to her father's hand.

The servant brought in the mail and the evening papers, but no one was in a hurry to read them. The news of the day seemed behind the times compared with the dazzling future. Maxime however took up the popular middle-class sheet, and threw his eye over the columns. He started at the latest items and exclaimed; "Hullo! War is declared." No one listened to him: Clerambault was dreaming over the last vibrations of his verses; Rosine lost in a calm ecstasy; the mother alone, who could not fix her mind on anything, buzzing about like a fly, chanced to catch the last word,—“Maxime, how can you be so silly?” she cried, but Maxime protested, showing his paper with the declaration of war between Austria and Servia.

“War with whom?”—“With Servia?”—“Is that all?” said the good woman, as if it were a question of something in the moon.

Maxime however persisted,—*doctus cum libro*,—arguing that from one thing to another, this shock no matter how distant, might bring about a general explosion; but Clerambault,

who was beginning to come out of his pleasant trance, smiled calmly, and said that nothing would happen.

"It's only a bluff," he declared, "like so many we have had for the last thirty years; we get them regularly every spring and summer; just bullying and sabre-rattling." People did not believe in war, no one wanted it; war had been proved to be impossible,—it was a bugbear that must be got out of the heads of free democracies . . . and he enlarged on this theme. The night was calm and sweet; all around familiar sounds and sights; the chirp of crickets in the fields, a glow-worm shining in the grass,—delicious perfume of honey-suckle. Far away the noise of a distant train; the little fountain tinkled, and in the moonless sky revolved the luminous track of the light on the Eiffel Tower.

The two women went into the house, and Maxime, tired of sitting down, ran about the garden with his little dog, while through the open windows floated out an air of Schumann's, which Rosine, full of timid emotion, was playing on the piano. Clerambault left alone, threw himself back in his wicker chair, glad to be a man, to be alive, breathing in the balm of this summer night with a thankful heart.

Six days later . . . Clerambault had spent the afternoon in the woods, and like the monk in the legend, lying under an oak tree, drinking in the song of a lark, a hundred years might have gone by him like a day. He could not tear himself away till night-fall. Maxime met him in the vestibule; he came forward smiling but rather pale, and said: "Well, Papa, we are in for it this time!" and he told him the news. The Russian mobilisation, the state of war in Germany;—Clerambault stared at him unable to comprehend, his thoughts were so far removed from these dark follies. He tried to dispute the facts, but the news was explicit, and so they went to the table, where Clerambault could eat but little.

He sought for reason why these two crimes should lead to nothing. Common-sense, public opinion, the prudence of governments, the repeated assurances of the socialists, Jaurès'

firm stand;—Maxime let him talk, he was thinking of other things,—like his dog with his ears pricked up for the sounds of the night. . . . Such a pure lovely night! Those who recall the last evenings of July, 1914, and the even more beautiful evening of the first day of August, must keep in their minds the wonderful splendour of Nature, as with a smile of pity she stretched out her arms to the degraded, self-devouring human race.

It was nearly ten o'clock when Clerambault ceased to talk, for no one had answered him. They sat then in silence with heavy hearts, listlessly occupied or seeming to be, the women with their work, Clerambault with his eyes, but not his mind, on a book. Maxime went out on the porch and smoked, leaning on the railing and looking down on the sleeping garden and the fairy-like play of the light and shadows on the path.

The telephone bell made them start. Someone was calling Clerambault, who went slowly to answer, half-asleep and absent so that at first he did not understand: "Hullo! is that you, old man?" as he recognised the voice of a brother-author in Paris, telephoning him from a newspaper office. Still he could not seem to understand; "I don't hear,—Jaurès? What about Jaurès? . . . Oh, my God!" Maxime full of a secret apprehension had listened from a distance; he ran and caught the receiver from his father's hand, as Clerambault let it drop with a despairing gesture. "Hullo, Hullo! What do you say? Jaurès assassinated! . . ." As exclamations of pain and anger crossed each other on the wire, Maxime made out the details, which he repeated to his family in a trembling voice. Rosine had led Clerambault back to the table, where he sat down completely crushed. Like the classic Fate, the shadow of a terrible misfortune settled over the house. It was not only the loss of his friend that chilled his heart,—the kind gay face, the cordial hand, the voice which drove away the clouds,—but the loss of the last hope of the threatened people. With a touching, child-like confidence he felt Jaurès to be the only man who could

avert the gathering storm, and he fallen, like Atlas, the sky would crumble.

Maxime rushed off to the station to get the news in Paris, promising to come back later in the evening, but Clerambault stayed in the isolated house, from which in the distance could be seen the far-off phosphorescence of the city. He had not stirred from the seat where he had fallen stupefied. This time he could no longer doubt, the catastrophe was coming, was upon them already. Madame Clerambault begged him to go to bed, but he would not listen to her. His thought was in ruins; he could distinguish nothing steady or constant, could not see any order, or follow an idea, for the walls of his inward dwelling had fallen in, and through the dust which rose, it was impossible to see what remained intact. He feared there was nothing left but a mass of suffering, at which he looked with dull eyes, unconscious of his falling tears. Maxime did not come home, carried away by the excitement at Paris.

Madame Clerambault had gone to bed, but about one o'clock she came and persuaded him to come up to their room, where he lay down; but when Pauline had fallen asleep—anxiety made her sleepy—he got up and went into the next room. He groaned, unable to breathe; his pain was so close and oppressive, that he had no room to draw his breath. With the prophetic hyper-sensitiveness of the artist, who often lives in tomorrow with more intensity than in the present moment, his agonised eyes and heart foresaw all that was to be. This inevitable war between the greatest nations of the world, seemed to him the failure of civilisation, the ruin of the most sacred hopes for human brotherhood. He was filled with horror at the vision of a maddened humanity, sacrificing its most precious treasures, strength, and genius, its highest virtues, to the bestial idol of war. It was to him a moral agony, a heart-rending communion with these unhappy millions. To what end? And of what use had been all the efforts of the ages? His heart seemed gripped by the void; he felt he could no longer live if his faith in the reason of men and their mutual love was

destroyed, if he was forced to acknowledge that the Credo of his life and art rested on a mistake, that a dark pessimism was the answer to the riddle of the world.

He turned his eyes away in terror, he was afraid to look it in the face, this monster who was there, whose hot breath he felt upon him. Clerambault implored,—he did not know who or what—that this might not be, that it might not be. Anything rather than this should be true! But the devouring fact stood just behind the opening door. . . . Through the whole night he strove to close that door. . . .

At last towards morning, an animal instinct began to wake, coming from he did not know where, which turned his despair towards the secret need of finding a definite and concrete cause, to fasten the blame on a man, or a group of men, and angrily hold them responsible for the misery of the world. It was as yet but a brief apparition, the first faint sign of a strange obscure, imperious soul, ready to break forth, the soul of the multitude. . . . It began to take shape when Maxime came home, for after the night in the streets of Paris, he fairly sweated with it; his very clothes, the hairs of his head, were impregnated. Worn out, excited, he could not sit down; his only thought was to go back again. The decree of mobilisation was to come out that day, war was certain, it was necessary, beneficial; some things must be put an end to, the future of humanity was at stake, the freedom of the world was threatened. "They" had counted on Jaurès' murder to sow dissension and raise riots in the country they meant to attack, but the entire nation had risen to rally round its leaders, the sublime days of the great Revolution were re-born. . . . Clerambault did not discuss these statements, he merely asked: "Do you think so? Are you quite sure?" It was a sort of hidden appeal. He wanted Maxime to state, to redouble his assertions. The news Maxime had brought added to the chaos, raised it to a climax, but at the same time it began to direct the distracted forces of his mind towards a fixed point, as the first bark of the shepherd's dog drives the sheep together.

Clerambault had but one wish left, to rejoin the flock, rub himself against the human animals, his brothers, feel with them, act with them. . . . Though exhausted by sleeplessness, he started, in spite of his wife, to take the train for Paris with Maxime. They had to wait a long time at the station, and also in the train, for the tracks were blocked, and the cars crowded; but in the common agitation Clerambault found calm. He questioned and listened, everybody fraternised, and not being sure yet what they thought, everyone felt that they thought alike. The same questions, the same trials menaced them, but each man was no longer alone to stand or fall, and the warmth of this contact was reassuring. Class distinctions were gone; no more workmen or gentlemen, no one looked at your clothes or your hands; they only looked at your eyes where they saw the same flame of life, wavering before the same impending death. All these people were so visibly strangers to the causes of the fatality, of this catastrophe, that their innocence led them like children to look elsewhere for the guilty. It comforted and quieted their conscience. Clerambault breathed more easily when he got to Paris. A stoical and virile melancholy had succeeded to the agony of the night. He was however only at the first stage.

*From the London Daily Mail
August 5, 1914*

ALL-NIGHT SCENES

DEMONSTRATING CROWDS ROUND THE PALACE

Shortly after eleven o'clock last night the King and Queen appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, and the enthusiasm of the crowd was tremendous. At 1:30 this morning the Mall was packed with people marching and singing, and there was still a large number at 3 A. M.

THE INVASION

FROM

"A HILLTOP ON THE MARNE" BY MILDRED ALDRICH

You can get some idea of how exhausted I was on that night of Wednesday, September 2, when I tell you that I waked the next morning to find that I had a picket at my gate. I did not know until Amélie came to get my coffee ready the next morning—that was Thursday, September 3—can it be that it is only five days ago! She also brought me news that they were preparing to blow up the bridges on the Marne; that the post-office had gone; that the English were cutting the telegraph wires.

While I was taking my coffee, quietly, as if it were an everyday occurrence, she said: "Well, madame, I imagine that we are going to see the Germans. Père is breaking an opening into the underground passage under the stable, and we are going to put all we can out of sight. Will you please gather up what you wish to save, and it can be hidden there?"

I don't know that I ever told you that all the hill is honey-combed with those old subterranean passages, like the one we saw at Provins. They say that they go as far as Crésy-en-Brie, and used to connect the royal palace there with one on this hill.

Naturally I gave a decided refusal to any move of that sort, so far as I was concerned. My books and portraits are the only things I should be eternally hurt to survive. To her argument that the books could be put there,—there was room enough,—I refused to listen. I had no idea of putting my books underground to be mildewed. Besides, if it had been possible I would not have attempted it—and it distinctly was impossible. I felt a good deal like the Belgian *réfugiés* I had seen,—all so well

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dressed; if my house was going up, it was going up in its best clothes. I had just been uprooted once—a horrid operation—and I did not propose to do it again so soon. To that my mind was made up.

Luckily for me—for Amélie was as set as I was—the argument was cut short by a knock at the front door. I opened it to find standing there a pretty French girl whom I had been seeing every day, as, morning and evening, she passed my gate to and from the railway station. Sooner or later I should have told you about her if all this excitement had not put it out of my mind and my letters. I did not know her name. I had never got to asking Amélie who she was, though I was a bit surprised to find any one of her type here where I had supposed there were only farmers and peasants.

She apologized for presenting herself so informally: said she had come, "*de la parte de maman*," to ask me what I proposed to do. I replied at once, "I am staying."

She looked a little surprised: said her mother wished to do the same, but that her only brother was with the colors; that he had confided his young wife and two babies to her, and that the Germans were so brutal to children that she did not dare risk it.

"Of course, you know," she added, "that everyone has left Couilly; all the shops are closed, and nearly everyone has gone from Voisins and Quincy. The mayor's wife left last night. Before going she came to us and advised us to escape at once, and even found us a horse and cart—the trains are not running. So mother thought that, as you were a foreigner, and all alone, we ought not to go without at least offering you a place in the wagon—the chance to go with us."

I was really touched, and told her so, but explained that I should stay. She was rather insistent—said her mother would be so distressed at leaving me alone with only a little group of women and children about me, who might, at the last moment, be panic-stricken.

I explained to her as well as I could that I was alone in the

GERMANY GOES TO WAR

FROM

"CLASS OF 1902" BY ERNST GLAESER

(*Translated by Willa and Edwin Muir*)

We left by train that very night. My uncle the confectioner booked a compartment for us and accompanied us to Solothurn. On the way he told us that everything had come very unexpectedly; nobody knew who was really to blame. Probably whoever lost the war; that was always the way. My mother was silent. I thought of Gaston and closed my eyes.

At Solothurn my uncle took his leave. He had to go back into the mountains, along with the rest of the officers, to see that the frontiers were secured. He was in great spirits at the prospect. He was an enthusiastic mountaineer and an ardent nature-lover.

As we got into the train the porter, who had received a substantial tip from my mother, declared that Germany would certainly win. On the platform were standing a group of Austrians who had worked as waiters in West Switzerland, and now, burning with ardour, were returning to their Fatherland to take revenge on the Serbs. They sang, "God maintain our Franz the Emperor," and had taken off their jackets. At last it had come, they shouted. They did not mean the train, which had just come in, but the war.

An elderly gentleman was sitting in our compartment. He began to talk to us at once, as if we were intimate acquaintances. On the back of his hotel bill he had added up the numerical strength of the European armies and balanced them against each other. He compared the two totals and assured my mother that the spiritual qualities of the German troops com-

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pensated for the numerical superiority of the Russians. For in this war spiritual qualities alone would decide the day, and Germany's spiritual qualities were the best in Europe. As a university professor he knew that our youth were ready for the fray, and full of ideals. At last the hour had come when our people could enter on its great world mission. He himself had been almost cast into despair by the crass materialism of the last few years—particularly in the lower classes; but at last life had regained an ideal significance. The great virtues of humanity, which had found their last refuge in Germany—fidelity, patriotism, readiness to die for an idea—these were triumphing now over the trading and shopkeeping spirit. This was the providential lightning flash that would clear the air; after it a new German people would arise whose victory would save the world from mediocrity, brutalizing materialism, western democracy and false humanitarianism. He could see a new world, ruled and directed by a race of aristocrats, who would root out all signs of degeneracy and lead humanity back again to the deserted peaks of the eternal ideals. Those who were too weak must perish by the wayside. The war would cleanse mankind from all its impurities. The future belonged to Siegfried; in this war Hagen would be slain.

The professor talked very gently; the light was reflected from his glasses. My mother, sitting opposite him, listened attentively. With her lips she silently repeated many of his phrases after him. For the first time she began to take some interest in the war. Perhaps because the man was a professor, perhaps because all that he said sounded so clever, perhaps because it had nothing to do with politics—at any rate when, as we neared Basle, the professor foretold that the war would give a mighty impetus to art, she capitulated to his logic. She believed in the war as she would have believed in a new poet. As we got out at the Basle station she said to me that a great time was before us.

The professor walked beside us. His face was grey and covered with an irregular stubble of hair. His shoulders looked feeble and were drawn up. Every now and then he sucked at

his teeth with his tongue, as if he were dislodging decayed scraps of food that stuck between them. He limped. I did not understand his enthusiasm for Siegfried.

When he made his name known to my mother, she whispered to me that he was a famous man. I must carry his bag.

The waiting-room was crammed. A telegram flew from hand to hand telling that Germany had declared war on Russia. On account of our brothers in Austria.

The *Wacht am Rhein* was sung and the Song of the Flags. The professor joined in the singing, my mother as well. I was afraid of so much joy, for I could not help thinking of Gaston. If Gaston had been there I would gladly have sung too.

"Do you see the people," said the professor to my mother, "how uplifted they are and how united? Does not that in itself justify the war?" He pointed to the waiting-room, which rang with songs and shouting. The men were shouting "brother" across to one another and went about shaking hands, although few of them were acquainted. Many of them were workmen. One could recognize them by their caps. They had come from Switzerland, from Italy, from France, where they had been working on machines. They went from table to table and fraternized with rich townspeople who had just come from holidaying in the mountains. In a corner sat a man of Jewish appearance along with two frightened daughters; he kept on treating the workmen to beer, and when they sang he sang too. "We're all brothers!" shouted the workmen; the gentleman nodded rapturously and paid.

"Is it not wonderful?" said the professor. "All our social divisions have vanished."

My mother nodded. She said something about "mass emotion."

"This war," answered the professor, "is an unparalleled aesthetic experience. For the first time I have seen the soul of the people laid bare." I sat with my lemonade in front of me and still thought of Gaston. Would he be singing too? . . ."

It was three o'clock in the morning when someone sprang on

to a table and shouted that the frontier was closed. A howl, as if they all felt betrayed, was the answer. "We must get home! We must join our brothers!" Then they sang again. The professor said that he would march over the frontier on foot, if no more trains were going. What should he do here in Switzerland? It was only a neutral country.

When towards six o'clock a Swiss official announced that they had managed to get together a train which, as the absolutely last one, would leave in twenty minutes, the whole station broke into jubilation, as if we were all going to a festival.

The train was rushed. We lost the professor in the confusion. We sat down on our bags in the corridor. My mother said it did not matter; we should have to make sacrifices now. Shortly after leaving Basle we came in sight of the Rhine. Everybody rushed to the windows. The men uncovered their heads, the women leaned tenderly on their husbands' shoulders. They sang solemnly and gravely, as if they were in church. Many had tears in their eyes. And the children, who stood apart by themselves in the corridors, gazed in silent wonder at the strange solemnity of the grownups.

At Mülheim we saw the first German soldiers. They wore new uniforms of grey-green cloth, and over their helmets was a protective covering of the same material. The railway embankment was guarded by soldiers. Every hundred yards there was a sentry, and on the bridges there were patrols. They were greeted with storms of cheering. "*Die Wacht am Rhein*," cried the women and threw them fruit, cigarettes and chocolate. The soldiers waved their rifles; some kissed their hands. These were officers. . . .

Flags fluttered over the roofs of the villages. The colours of harvest, the yellow and red, gleamed heavy and languid in the soft morning light as we passed through Brandenburg. They fluttered over the huts in the vineyards, they billowed from the belfries of churches and the chimneys of farmhouses, they filled the stations with colour, they almost covered the schools, and the children waved them as they stood behind the

barriers and shouted "Hurrah!" Yellow and red. Wheat and poppies. The air smelt of them.

As we neared Freiburg, the whole train was singing. We all knew one another. Strangers shared their food together, exchanged cigarettes, presented the children with chocolate. The children were a little afraid, for they had never seen so many good people before.

I stood beside my mother at the window and did not dare to move. I thought I was dreaming. A single movement, I thought, might destroy this dream, and the people would become as indifferent or as hostile to one another as before. I held my breath and implored God to keep the miracle from coming to an end.

I did not think any longer of Gaston. The flags and the singing closed me in. My mother kissed me, strange men lifted me on their shoulders, strange ladies gave me chocolate and stroked my hair, young girls talked to me as if I were their brother—I was giddy with this incomprehensible human love.

When we drew into Freiburg, the platform was thronged with shouting people. Students in fantastic jackets sprang into the train singing. Through the open windows they kissed girls who showered flowers upon them. Elderly gentlemen had fastened little flags to their canes and carried them over their shoulders. Presents were being showered on soldiers, whose rifles were trimmed with sprays of roses as if they were all celebrating their birthday. Even the waiters in the station restaurant looked cheerful and the porters springing from the carriages laughed like benevolent uncles.

On the opposite side of the platform stood a long red transport train. In the wide-open door of the cattle trucks the laughing round faces of the soldiers hung like clusters of brown fruit. The cars waved with banners and sprays of foliage, the sides were covered with drawings in chalk. Gay groups of white-clad girls ran up to the soldiers and stuck flowers in their tunics. Before a second-class carriage in the middle of the train, where the officers walked up and down in

their fine uniforms and shining leather gaiters, a military band was playing light marches and cheerful folk-songs. When a handsome soldier seized one of the white-clad girls round the waist and gave her a resounding kiss clean on the mouth, the whole station roared "Hurrah!" New military transports kept rolling in. Even the cannons on the flat-cars were adorned with flowers and green branches. On the officers' carriage were stuck complete little birch trees, hung with brilliant ribbons, and sometimes with sausages. Everybody was laughing, the soldiers loudest of all.

Were they going on a holiday or to a festival?

As our train drew out and slowly left the station behind, the military band struck up: *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*. Deep-throated the crowd joined in, like a choral the song mounted in the clear, sunny air fluttering with banners; all took their hats off, the officers saluted elegantly, the soldiers presented arms, the young girls sang in voices as clear as their white frocks, the students shook hands, the women laid their arms tenderly round the shoulders of their husbands, and the faster the train went the louder and higher rose the singing. I was swallowed up, submerged in the singing. I could not distinguish things any longer. It was to me as if I had a thousand mothers and a thousand fathers. . . .

Then my mother bent over me, her hair brushed my cheek, and she whispered in my ear, her voice choked with emotion: "Isn't it wonderful?" I flung my arms round her. She drew me to her. "Yes," she said and nodded towards the people in the corridors standing close together like lovers, serene and happy. "Our dear German people, how terribly we have misunderstood their real nature." She was crying. A little in front of us beside the lavatory the students were singing: "No better death in all the world, than on the field to perish. . . ."

The train rolled between the rich pastures of Baden, heavy with grain. From all the towns rose shouts of rejoicing.

I was dazzled. The world lay transfigured. The war had made everything beautiful.

THE BIRTH OF THE FRENCH SOLDIER

FROM

"THE POILUS" BY JOSEPH DELTEIL

(Translated by Jacques Le Clercq)

On August 1st, France became a railway-station. Every hill sheltered a train, every village a station. From Brest to Nice and from Dunkerque to Bordeaux, it was but one immense train. Everyone took the train; the territorials along the roadbeds, the conscripts on the railroads. The brains of the General Staff were bowed over coaches and tunnels. The spirit of mothers travelled over rails.

Over the Breton moor, between the calvaries, jerk-water trains alive with Breton hats rolled by amid the noise of oceans. The Basque lines were filled with *bérets*. The Central Mountains unloaded the oats of Auvergne across the cabbage-fields. Along the Mediterranean crept the little trains of the Midi, dripping tenors and wine. In the sunlight, through the fog, France was mobilizing her children. Every corner sent forth its handsomest youngsters (for Death, that female, likes handsome youngsters), every plot of ground its fairest flower (for the Skeleton delights in flowers). The villages gave up their village-bantams and the farms their tall light lads. All France robbed herself of her blood, sending it in reservoir-coaches in the direction of the blood-factories. Cards were shuffled, drawn, and the top of the basket was for Death. Death reserved for herself the finest portion of life. In front of hedges of territorials, the supreme lads filed by, the essence of the nation, its joy and its flower, its most favored substance, its choicest dream!

These tall lads, red with health, dazzled by the wide world and by long journeys, laughing with all their heart, clad in their

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coarse Sunday best, these handsome lads covered with girls' kisses and the skins of angels, hot with journeymanship and wine, cast loose with their heedlessness and their sacks full of ham for the adventure in the depths of space: what a *gorgeous* vision of life!

All of it poured into Paris. The Gare de l'Est was the station of France. Amid the turmoil of the world's great fever, the mobilized ate their lunch on platforms ashine with oil. They sat on the steps of coaches, on the bloodless ballasting, in a deluge of sardine-cans and good humour, their boots on their cheeses and a litre of wine close to their hearts, in a flash of knives and of teeth, jovial and bantering, gentle and violent, with their large hands and their large eyes. They called to each other from the Ardèche to Caen in racy terms of the soil; they ate with relish amid a din of ribaldries. A fragrance of food rose towards a sky rich with sunlight. A phantasmagoria danced a saraband in the sun rays. The sons of the plow and of the shop, the sons of the people, free from tool-bearing and bread-winning, laughed in an atmosphere of liberty under the guard of a corporal. No more worries, rain and hay; no more bosses and no more work; but all around them a great life, empty and new; a row of Paris urchins, dirty from birth; a universe of beautiful locomotives, of houses with fine façades, of whistles—that vulgar luxury and that smell of cities that debase the heart of men, of beautiful women wherever they come from. . . .

The world had broken her shell and the almond of life was bare. That mob of young males, their bellies in the throes of digestion, ogled the girls of Paris under a radiant sky, and meditated on some base paradise.

"It's like a swell brothel!" said one of them.

At night the Gare de l'Est assumed an incomparable exterior and incomparable proportions. All this vaguely circular space, raised by sighs and roaring, this coming-and-going of enchanted machines in the smoothest directions; those whistles, that might be sounds or colors; and all that illumination in

three tones, blue, green, red, laid out with a fine disorder by some mute artist; and that interclashing of steel curves, softer in their obscure mass than the slope of hips; that impression of intelligent mystery, of heavenly coördination; that vision of mechanics and of spatial geometry,—there lay a semi-divine spectacle, a true and mighty dream!

Throughout this period, Paris was under pressure. Puissant virtues of patriotism, born deep down beneath the skulls of men, burst through and spilled out over the public squares and boulevards. To Berlin! To Berlin! The word *Berlin* filled Paris. Detachments passed, and every rifle owned the right to a flower, and every soldier owned the right to a kiss. Women softened at sight. Their dresses could no longer contain their hearts. They felt a thousand obligations of love in themselves. They distributed their lips to those young men in arms with the pride of priestesses. A kind of brotherhood like that of flowers, a white sentimental friendship, a universal innocence fell upon every creature. *Le mal*, the notion of evil—and *le mâle*, the male—disappeared. They were all children, angels. For a few days, France was Paradise on earth.

On about August 9th, news came of the French offensive in Alsace. The Army of Belfort attacked on August 7th. The same day, Bonneau's Brigade (7th Army Corps) won the first battle of the campaign at Altkirch. On August 8th, the French troops entered Mulhouse, all their bugles to windward, amid the enthusiasm of Alsace. Suddenly, every Frenchman felt his chest expand—wider for the whole of Alsace. . . .

FIRST NEWS

FROM

"NOTES ON LIFE AND LETTERS" BY JOSEPH CONRAD

. . . The session of the University was ended and the students were either all gone or going home to different parts of Poland, but the professors had not all departed yet on their respective holidays, and amongst them the tone of scepticism prevailed generally. Upon the whole there was very little inclination to talk about the possibility of a war. Nationally, the Poles felt that from their point of view there was nothing to hope from it. "Whatever happens," said a very distinguished man to me, "we may be certain that it's *our* skins which will pay for it as usual." A well-known literary critic and writer on economical subjects said to me: "War seems a material impossibility, precisely because it would mean the complete ruin of all material interest." . . .

Next day the librarian of the University invited me to come and have a look at the library which I had not seen since I was 14 years old. It was from him that I learned that the greater part of my father's MSS. was preserved there. He confessed that he had not looked them through thoroughly yet, but he told me that there was a lot of very important letters bearing on the epoch from '60 to '63, to and from many prominent Poles of that time; and he added: "There is a bundle of correspondence that will appeal to you personally. Those are letters written by your father to an intimate friend in whose papers they were found. They contain many references to yourself, though you couldn't have been more than four years old at the time. Your father seems to have been extremely interested in his son." That afternoon I went to the University,

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taking with me *my* eldest son. The attention of that young Englishman was mainly attracted by some relics of Copernicus in a glass case. I saw the bundle of letters and accepted the kind proposal of the librarian that he should have them copied for me during the holidays. In the range of the deserted vaulted rooms lined with books, full of august memories, and in the passionless silence of all this enshrined wisdom, we walked here and there talking of the past, the great historical past in which lived the inextinguishable spark of national life; and all around us the centuries-old buildings lay still and empty, composing themselves to rest after a year of work on the minds of another generation.

No echo of the German ultimatum to Russia penetrated that academical peace. But the news had come. When we stepped into the street out of the deserted main quadrangle, we three, I imagine, were the only people in the town who did not know of it. My boy and I parted from the librarian (who hurried home to pack up for his holiday) and walked on to the hotel, where we found my wife actually in the car waiting for us to take a run of some ten miles to the country house of an old school-friend of mine. He had been my greatest chum. In my wanderings about the world I had heard that his later career both at school and at the University had been of extraordinary brilliance—in classics, I believe. But in this, the iron-grey moustache period of his life, he informed me with badly concealed pride that he had gained world fame as the Inventor—no, Inventor is not the word—Producer, I believe would be the right term—of a wonderful kind of beetroot seed. The beet grown from this seed contained more sugar to the square inch—or was it to the square root?—than any kind of beet. He exported this seed, not only with profit (and even to the United States), but with a certain amount of glory which seemed to have gone slightly to his head. There is a fundamental strain of agriculturist in a Pole which no amount of brilliance, even classical, can destroy. While we were having tea outside, looking down the lovely slope of the gardens at the

view of the city in the distance, the possibilities of the war faded from our minds. Suddenly my friend's wife came to us with a telegram in her hand and said calmly: "General mobilisation, do you know?" We looked at her like men aroused from a dream. "Yes," she insisted, "they are already taking the horses out of the ploughs and carts." I said: "We had better go back to town as quick as we can," and my friend assented with a troubled look: "Yes, you had better." As we passed through villages on our way back we saw mobs of horses assembled on the commons with soldiers guarding them, and groups of villagers looking on silently at the officers with their note-books checking deliveries and writing out receipts. Some old peasant women were already weeping aloud.

When our car drew up at the door of the hotel, the manager himself came to help my wife out. In the first moment I did not quite recognise him. His luxuriant black locks were gone, his head was closely cropped, and as I glanced at it he smiled and said: "I shall sleep at the barracks to-night."

I cannot reproduce the atmosphere of that night, the first night after mobilisation. The shops and the gateways of the houses were of course closed, but all through the dark hours the town hummed with voices; the echoes of distant shouts entered the open windows of our bedroom. Groups of men talking noisily walked in the middle of the roadway escorted by distressed women; men of all callings and of all classes going to report themselves at the fortress. Now and then a military car tooting furiously would whisk through the streets empty of wheeled traffic, like an intensely black shadow under the great flood of electric lights on the grey pavement.

But what produced the greatest impression on my mind was a gathering at night in the coffee-room of my hotel of a few men of mark whom I was asked to join. It was about one o'clock in the morning. The shutters were up. For some reason or other the electric light was not switched on, and the big room was lit up only by a few tall candles, just enough for us to see each other's faces by. I saw in those faces the awful desolation of

men whose country, torn in three, found itself engaged in the contest with no will of its own and not even the power to assert itself at the cost of life. All the past was gone, and there was no future, whatever happened; no road which did not seem to lead to moral annihilation. I remember one of those men addressing me after a period of mournful silence compounded of mental exhaustion and unexpressed forebodings.

"What do you think England will do? If there is a ray of hope anywhere it is only there."

I said: "I believe I know what England will do" (this was before the news of the violation of Belgium neutrality arrived), "though I won't tell you, for I am not absolutely certain. But I can tell you what I am absolutely certain of. It is this: If England comes into the war, then, no matter who may want to make peace at the end of six months at the cost of right and justice, England will keep on fighting for years if necessary. You may reckon on that."

"What, even alone?" asked somebody across the room.

I said: "Yes, even alone. But if things go so far as that England will not be alone."

I think that at that moment I must have been inspired.

London, August 5, 1914

ANNOUNCEMENT ISSUED AT THE FOREIGN
OFFICE AT 12:15 A. M.

Owing to the summary rejection by the German Government of the request made by His Majesty's Government for assurances that the neutrality of Belgium would be respected, His Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin has received his passports, and His Majesty's Government has declared to the German Government that a state of war exists between Great Britain and Germany as from 11 P. M. on August 4.

MR. BRITLING LOOKS AT WAR

FROM

"MR. BRITLING SEES IT THROUGH" BY H. G. WELLS

Mr. Britling started for his moonlight ride about half-past nine that night. He announced that he could neither rest nor work, the war had thrown him into a fever; the driving of the automobile was just the distraction he needed; he might not, he added casually, return for a day or so. When he felt he could work again he would come back. He filled up his petrol tank by the light of an electric torch, and sat in his car in the garage and studied his map of the district. His thoughts wandered from the road to Pyecrafts to the coast, and to the possible route of a raider. Suppose the enemy anticipated a declaration of war! Here he might come, and here. . . .

He roused himself from these speculations to the business in hand.

The evening seemed as light as day, a cool moonshine filled the world. The road was silver that flushed to pink at the approach of Mr. Britling's headlight, the dark turf at the wayside and the bushes on the bank became for a moment an acid green as the glare passed. The full moon was climbing up the sky, and so bright that scarcely a star was visible in the blue grey of the heavens. Houses gleamed white a mile away, and ever and again a moth would flutter and hang in the light of the lamps, and then vanish again in the night.

Gladys was in excellent condition for a run, and so was Mr. Britling. He went neither fast nor slow, and with a quite unfamiliar confidence. Life, which had seemed all day a congested confusion darkened by threats, became cool, mysterious and aloof and with a quality of dignified reassurance.

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He steered along the narrow road by the black dogrose hedge, and so into the high road towards the village. The village was alight at several windows but almost deserted. Out beyond, a coruscation of lights burnt like a group of topaz and rubies set in the silver shield of the night. The festivities of the Flower Show were still in full progress, and the reduction of the entrance fee after seven had drawn in every lingering outsider. The roundabouts churned out their relentless music, and the bottle-shooting galleries popped and crashed. The well-patronized ostriches and motorcars flickered round in a pulsing rhythm; black, black, black, before the naphtha flares.

Mr. Britling pulled up at the side of the road, and sat for a little while watching the silhouettes move hither and thither from shadow to shadow across the bright spaces.

"On the very brink of war—on the brink of Armageddon," he whispered at last. "Do they understand? Do any of us understand?"

He slipped in his gear to starting, and was presently running quietly with his engine purring almost inaudibly along the level road to Hartleytree. The sounds behind him grew smaller and smaller, and died away leaving an immense unruffled quiet under the moon. There seemed no motion but his own, no sound but the neat, subdued, mechanical rhythm in front of his feet. Presently he ran out into the main road, and heedless of the lane that turned away towards Pycrafts, drove on smoothly towards the east and the sea. Never before had he driven by night. He had expected a fumbling and tedious journey; he found he had come into an undreamt-of silvery splendour of motion. For it seemed as though even the automobile was running on moonlight that night. . . . Pycrafts could wait. Indeed the later he got to Pycrafts the more moving and romantic the little comedy of reconciliation would be. And he was in no hurry for that comedy. He felt he wanted to apprehend this vast summer calm about him, that alone of all things of the day seemed to convey anything whatever of the majestic tragedy that was happening to mankind. As one

slipped through this still vigil one could imagine for the first time the millions away there marching, the wide river valleys, villages, cities, mountain-ranges, ports and seas inaudibly busy.

"Even now," he said, "the battleships may be fighting."

He listened, but the sound was only the low intermittent drumming of his cylinders as he ran with his throttle nearly closed, down a stretch of gentle hill.

He felt that he must see the sea. He would follow the road beyond the Rodwell villages, and then turn up to the crest of Eastonbury Hill. And thither he went and saw in the gap of the low hills beyond a V-shaped level of moonlit water that glittered and yet lay still. He stopped his car by the roadside, and sat for a long time looking at this and musing. And once it seemed to him three little shapes like short black needles passed in line ahead across the molten silver.

But that may have been just the straining of the eyes. . . .

All sorts of talk had come to Mr. Britling's ears about the navies of England and France and Germany; there had been public disputes of experts, much whispering and discussion in private. We had the heavier vessels, the bigger guns, but it was not certain that we had the preëminence in science and invention. Were they relying as we were relying on Dreadnoughts, or had they their secrets and surprises for us? Tonight, perhaps, the great ships were steaming to conflict. . . .

Tonight all over the world ships must be in flight and ships pursuing; ten thousand towns must be ringing with the immediate excitement of war. . . .

Only a year ago Mr. Britling had been lunching on a battleship and looking over its intricate machinery. It had seemed to him then that there could be no better human stuff in the world than the quiet, sunburnt, disciplined men and officers he had met. . . . And our little army, too, must be gathering tonight, the little army that had been chastened and reborn in South Africa, that he was convinced was individually more gallant and self-reliant and capable than any other army in the world. He would have sneered or protested if he had heard another

Englishman say that, but in his heart he held the dear belief. . . .

And what other aviators in the world could fly as the Frenchmen and Englishmen he had met once or twice at Eastchurch and Salisbury could fly? These are things of race and national quality. Let the German cling to his gasbags. "We shall beat them in the air," he whispered. "We shall beat them on the seas. Surely we shall beat them on the seas. If we have men enough and guns enough we shall beat them on land. . . . Yet ——— For years they have been preparing. . . ."

There was little room in the heart of Mr. Britling that night for any love but the love of England. He loved England now as a nation of men. There could be no easy victory. Good for us with our too easy natures that there could be no easy victory. But victory we must have now—or perish. . . .

He roused himself with a sigh, restarted his engine, and went on to find some turning place. He still had a colourless impression that the journey's end was Pyecrafts.

"We must all do the thing we can," he thought, and for a time the course of his automobile along a winding down-hill road held his attention so that he could not get beyond it. He turned about and ran up over the hill again and down long slopes inland, running very softly and smoothly with his lights devouring the road ahead and sweeping the banks and hedges beside him, and as he came down a little hill through a village he heard a confused clatter and jingle of traffic ahead, and saw the danger triangle that warns of cross-roads. He slowed down and then pulled up abruptly.

Riding across the gap between the cottages was a string of horsemen, and then a grey cart, and then a team drawing a heavy object—a gun, and then more horsemen, and then a second gun. It was all a dim brown procession in the moonlight. A mounted officer came up beside him and looked at him and then went back to the cross-roads, but as yet England was not troubling about spies. Four more guns passed, and then a string of carts and more mounted men, sitting stiffly. Nobody was

singing or shouting; scarcely a word was audible, and through all the column there was an effect of quiet efficient haste. And so they passed, and rumbled and jingled and clattered out of the scene, leaving Mr. Britling in his car in the dreaming village. He restarted his engine once more, and went his way thoughtfully.

He went so thoughtfully that presently he missed the road to Pyecrafts—if ever he had been on the road to Pyecrafts at all—altogether. He found himself upon a highway running across a flattish plain, and presently discovered by the sight of the Great Bear, faint but traceable in the blue overhead, that he was going due north. Well, presently he would turn south and west; that in good time; now he wanted to feel; he wanted to think. How could he best help England in the vast struggle for which the empty silence and beauty of this night seemed to be waiting? But indeed he was not thinking at all, but feeling, feeling wonder, as he had never felt it since his youth had passed from him. This war might end nearly everything in the world as he had known the world; that idea struggled slowly through the moonlight into consciousness, and won its way to dominance in his mind.

The character of the road changed; the hedges fell away, the pine trees and pine woods took the place of the black squat shapes of the hawthorn and oak and apple. The houses grew rarer and the world emptier and emptier, until he could have believed that he was the only man awake and out-of-doors in all the slumbering land. . . .

For a time a little thing caught hold of his dreaming mind. Continually as he ran on, black, silent birds rose startled out of the dust of the road before him, and fluttered noiselessly beyond his double wedge of light. What sort of birds could they be? Were they night-jars? Were they different kinds of birds snatching at the quiet of the night for a dust bath in the sand? This little independent thread of inquiry ran through the texture of his mind and died away. . . .

And at one place there was a great bolting of rabbits across the road, almost under his wheels. . . .

The phrases he had used that afternoon at Claverings came back presently into his head. They were, he felt assured, the phrases that had to be said now. This war could be seen as the noblest of wars, as the crowning struggle of mankind against national dominance and national aggression; or else it was a mere struggle of nationalities and pure destruction and catastrophe. Its enormous significances, he felt, must not be lost in any petty bickering about the minor issues of the conflict. But were these enormous significances being stated clearly enough? Were they being understood by the mass of liberal and pacific thinkers? He drove more and more slowly as these questions crowded upon his attention until at last he came to a stop altogether. . . . "Certain things must be said clearly," he whispered. "Certain things — The meaning of England. . . . The deep and long-unspoken desire for kindness and fairness. . . . Now is the time for speaking. It must be put as straight now as her gun-fire, as honestly as the steering of her ships."

Phrases and paragraphs began to shape themselves in his mind as he sat with one arm on his steering-wheel.

Suddenly he roused himself, turned over the map in the map-case beside him, and tried to find his position. . . .

So far as he could judge he had strayed into Suffolk. . . .

About one o'clock in the morning he found himself in Newmarket. Newmarket too was a moonlit emptiness, but as he hesitated at the cross-roads he became aware of a policeman standing quite stiff and still at the corner by the church.

"Matching's Easy?" he cried.

"That road, Sir, until you come to Market Saffron, and then to the left. . . ."

Mr. Britling had a definite purpose now in his mind, and he drove faster, but still very carefully and surely. He was already within a mile or so of Market Saffron before he remembered that he had made a kind of appointment with himself at Pyecrafts. He stared at two conflicting purposes. He turned over certain possibilities.

At the Market Saffron cross-roads he slowed down, and for a moment he hung undecided.

"Oliver," he said, and as he spoke he threw over his steering-wheel towards the homeward way. . . . He finished his sentence when he had negotiated the corner safely. "Oliver must have her. . . ."

And then, perhaps fifty yards farther along, and this time almost indignantly: "She ought to have married him long ago. . . ."

He put his automobile in the garage, and then went round under the black shadow of his cedars to the front door. He had no key and for a time he failed to rouse his wife by flinging pebbles and gravel at her half-open window. But at last he heard her stirring and called out to her.

He explained he had returned because he wanted to write. He wanted indeed to write quite urgently. He went straight up to his room, lit his reading-lamp, made himself some tea, and changed into his nocturnal suit. Daylight found him still writing very earnestly at his pamphlet. The title he had chosen was: "And Now War Ends."

A FRENCHMAN SEES THE WAR

FROM

"CLERAMBAULT" BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

(Translated by Katherine Miller)

Agénor Clerambault sat under an arbour in his garden at St. Prix, reading to his wife and children an ode that he had just written, dedicated to Peace, ruler of men and things, "Ara Pacis Augustae." In it he wished to celebrate the near approach of universal brotherhood. It was a July evening; a last rosy light lay on the tree-tops, and through the luminous haze, like a veil over the slopes of the hillside and the grey plain of the distant city, the windows on Montmartre burned like sparks of gold. Dinner was just over. Clerambault leaned across the table where the dishes yet stood, and as he spoke his glance full of simple pleasure passed from one to the other of his three auditors, sure of meeting the reflection of his own happiness.

His wife Pauline followed the flight of his thought with difficulty. After the third phrase anything read aloud made her feel drowsy, and the affairs of her household took on an absurd importance; one might say that the voice of the reader made them chirp like birds in a cage. It was in vain that she tried to follow on Clerambault's lips, and even to imitate with her own, the words whose meaning she no longer understood; her eye mechanically noted a hole in the cloth, her fingers picked at the crumbs on the table, her mind flew back to a troublesome bill, till as her husband's eye seemed to catch her in the act, hastily snatching at the last words she had heard, she went into raptures over a fragment of verse,—for she could never quote poetry accurately. "What was that, Agénor? Do repeat that

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last line. How beautiful it is." Little Rose, her daughter, frowned, and Maxime, the grown son, was annoyed and said impatiently: "You are always interrupting, Mamma!"

Clerambault smiled and patted his wife's hand affectionately. He had married her for love when he was young, poor, and unknown, and together they had gone through years of hardship. She was not quite on his intellectual level and the difference did not diminish with advancing years, but Clerambault loved and respected his helpmate, and she strove, without much success, to keep step with her great man of whom she was so proud. He was extraordinarily indulgent to her. His was not a critical nature—which was a great help to him in life in spite of innumerable errors of judgment; but as these were always to the advantage of others, whom he saw at their best, people laughed but liked him. He did not interfere with their money hunt and his countrified simplicity was refreshing to the world-weary, like a wild-growing thicket in a city square.

Maxime was amused by all this, knowing what it was worth. He was a good-looking boy of nineteen with bright laughing eyes, and in the Parisian surroundings he had been quick to acquire the gift of rapid, humorous observation, dwelling on the outside view of men and things more than on ideas. Even in those he loved, nothing ridiculous escaped him, but it was without ill-nature. Clerambault smiled at the youthful impertinence which did not diminish Maxime's admiration for his father but rather added to its flavour. A boy in Paris would tweak the Good Lord by the beard, by way of showing affection!

Rosine was silent according to her habit; it was not easy to know her thoughts as she listened, bent forward, her hands folded and her arms leaning on the table. Some natures seem made to receive, like the earth which opens itself silently to every seed. Many seeds fall and remain dormant; none can tell which will bring forth fruit. The soul of the young girl was of this kind; her face did not reflect the words of the reader as

did Maxime's mobile features, but the slight flush on her cheek and the moist glance of her eyes under their drooping lids showed inward ardour and feeling. She looked like those Florentine pictures of the Virgin stirred by the magical salutation of the Archangel. Clerambault saw it all and as he glanced around his little circle his eye rested with special delight on the fair bending head which seemed to feel his look.

On this July evening these four people were united in a bond of affection and tranquil happiness of which the central point was the father, the idol of the family.

Clerambault had just finished with a Schilleresque vision of the fraternal joys promised in the future. Maxime, carried away by his enthusiasm in spite of his sense of humour, had given the orator a round of applause all by himself. Pauline noisily asked if Agénor had not heated himself in speaking, and amid the excitement Rosine silently pressed her lips to her father's hand.

The servant brought in the mail and the evening papers, but no one was in a hurry to read them. The news of the day seemed behind the times compared with the dazzling future. Maxime however took up the popular middle-class sheet, and threw his eye over the columns. He started at the latest items and exclaimed; "Hullo! War is declared." No one listened to him: Clerambault was dreaming over the last vibrations of his verses; Rosine lost in a calm ecstasy; the mother alone, who could not fix her mind on anything, buzzing about like a fly, chanced to catch the last word,—“Maxime, how can you be so silly?” she cried, but Maxime protested, showing his paper with the declaration of war between Austria and Servia.

“War with whom?”—“With Servia?”—“Is that all?” said the good woman, as if it were a question of something in the moon.

Maxime however persisted,—*doctus cum libro*,—arguing that from one thing to another, this shock no matter how distant, might bring about a general explosion; but Clerambault,

who was beginning to come out of his pleasant trance, smiled calmly, and said that nothing would happen.

"It's only a bluff," he declared, "like so many we have had for the last thirty years; we get them regularly every spring and summer; just bullying and sabre-rattling." People did not believe in war, no one wanted it; war had been proved to be impossible,—it was a bugbear that must be got out of the heads of free democracies . . . and he enlarged on this theme. The night was calm and sweet; all around familiar sounds and sights; the chirp of crickets in the fields, a glow-worm shining in the grass,—delicious perfume of honey-suckle. Far away the noise of a distant train; the little fountain tinkled, and in the moonless sky revolved the luminous track of the light on the Eiffel Tower.

The two women went into the house, and Maxime, tired of sitting down, ran about the garden with his little dog, while through the open windows floated out an air of Schumann's, which Rosine, full of timid emotion, was playing on the piano. Clerambault left alone, threw himself back in his wicker chair, glad to be a man, to be alive, breathing in the balm of this summer night with a thankful heart.

Six days later . . . Clerambault had spent the afternoon in the woods, and like the monk in the legend, lying under an oak tree, drinking in the song of a lark, a hundred years might have gone by him like a day. He could not tear himself away till night-fall. Maxime met him in the vestibule; he came forward smiling but rather pale, and said: "Well, Papa, we are in for it this time!" and he told him the news. The Russian mobilisation, the state of war in Germany;—Clerambault stared at him unable to comprehend, his thoughts were so far removed from these dark follies. He tried to dispute the facts, but the news was explicit, and so they went to the table, where Clerambault could eat but little.

He sought for reason why these two crimes should lead to nothing. Common-sense, public opinion, the prudence of governments, the repeated assurances of the socialists, Jaurès'

firm stand;—Maxime let him talk, he was thinking of other things,—like his dog with his ears pricked up for the sounds of the night. . . . Such a pure lovely night! Those who recall the last evenings of July, 1914, and the even more beautiful evening of the first day of August, must keep in their minds the wonderful splendour of Nature, as with a smile of pity she stretched out her arms to the degraded, self-devouring human race.

It was nearly ten o'clock when Clerambault ceased to talk, for no one had answered him. They sat then in silence with heavy hearts, listlessly occupied or seeming to be, the women with their work, Clerambault with his eyes, but not his mind, on a book. Maxime went out on the porch and smoked, leaning on the railing and looking down on the sleeping garden and the fairy-like play of the light and shadows on the path.

The telephone bell made them start. Someone was calling Clerambault, who went slowly to answer, half-asleep and absent so that at first he did not understand: "Hullo! is that you, old man?" as he recognised the voice of a brother-author in Paris, telephoning him from a newspaper office. Still he could not seem to understand; "I don't hear,—Jaurès? What about Jaurès? . . . Oh, my God!" Maxime full of a secret apprehension had listened from a distance; he ran and caught the receiver from his father's hand, as Clerambault let it drop with a despairing gesture. "Hullo, Hullo! What do you say? Jaurès assassinated! . . ." As exclamations of pain and anger crossed each other on the wire, Maxime made out the details, which he repeated to his family in a trembling voice. Rosine had led Clerambault back to the table, where he sat down completely crushed. Like the classic Fate, the shadow of a terrible misfortune settled over the house. It was not only the loss of his friend that chilled his heart,—the kind gay face, the cordial hand, the voice which drove away the clouds,—but the loss of the last hope of the threatened people. With a touching, child-like confidence he felt Jaurès to be the only man who could

avert the gathering storm, and he fallen, like Atlas, the sky would crumble.

Maxime rushed off to the station to get the news in Paris, promising to come back later in the evening, but Clerambault stayed in the isolated house, from which in the distance could be seen the far-off phosphorescence of the city. He had not stirred from the seat where he had fallen stupefied. This time he could no longer doubt, the catastrophe was coming, was upon them already. Madame Clerambault begged him to go to bed, but he would not listen to her. His thought was in ruins; he could distinguish nothing steady or constant, could not see any order, or follow an idea, for the walls of his inward dwelling had fallen in, and through the dust which rose, it was impossible to see what remained intact. He feared there was nothing left but a mass of suffering, at which he looked with dull eyes, unconscious of his falling tears. Maxime did not come home, carried away by the excitement at Paris.

Madame Clerambault had gone to bed, but about one o'clock she came and persuaded him to come up to their room, where he lay down; but when Pauline had fallen asleep—anxiety made her sleepy—he got up and went into the next room. He groaned, unable to breathe; his pain was so close and oppressive, that he had no room to draw his breath. With the prophetic hyper-sensitiveness of the artist, who often lives in tomorrow with more intensity than in the present moment, his agonised eyes and heart foresaw all that was to be. This inevitable war between the greatest nations of the world, seemed to him the failure of civilisation, the ruin of the most sacred hopes for human brotherhood. He was filled with horror at the vision of a maddened humanity, sacrificing its most precious treasures, strength, and genius, its highest virtues, to the bestial idol of war. It was to him a moral agony, a heart-rending communion with these unhappy millions. To what end? And of what use had been all the efforts of the ages? His heart seemed gripped by the void; he felt he could no longer live if his faith in the reason of men and their mutual love was

destroyed, if he was forced to acknowledge that the Credo of his life and art rested on a mistake, that a dark pessimism was the answer to the riddle of the world.

He turned his eyes away in terror, he was afraid to look it in the face, this monster who was there, whose hot breath he felt upon him. Clerambault implored,—he did not know who or what—that this might not be, that it might not be. Anything rather than this should be true! But the devouring fact stood just behind the opening door. . . . Through the whole night he strove to close that door. . . .

At last towards morning, an animal instinct began to wake, coming from he did not know where, which turned his despair towards the secret need of finding a definite and concrete cause, to fasten the blame on a man, or a group of men, and angrily hold them responsible for the misery of the world. It was as yet but a brief apparition, the first faint sign of a strange obscure, imperious soul, ready to break forth, the soul of the multitude. . . . It began to take shape when Maxime came home, for after the night in the streets of Paris, he fairly sweated with it; his very clothes, the hairs of his head, were impregnated. Worn out, excited, he could not sit down; his only thought was to go back again. The decree of mobilisation was to come out that day, war was certain, it was necessary, beneficial; some things must be put an end to, the future of humanity was at stake, the freedom of the world was threatened. "They" had counted on Jaurès' murder to sow dissension and raise riots in the country they meant to attack, but the entire nation had risen to rally round its leaders, the sublime days of the great Revolution were re-born. . . . Clerambault did not discuss these statements, he merely asked: "Do you think so? Are you quite sure?" It was a sort of hidden appeal. He wanted Maxime to state, to redouble his assertions. The news Maxime had brought added to the chaos, raised it to a climax, but at the same time it began to direct the distracted forces of his mind towards a fixed point, as the first bark of the shepherd's dog drives the sheep together.

Clerambault had but one wish left, to rejoin the flock, rub himself against the human animals, his brothers, feel with them, act with them. . . . Though exhausted by sleeplessness, he started, in spite of his wife, to take the train for Paris with Maxime. They had to wait a long time at the station, and also in the train, for the tracks were blocked, and the cars crowded; but in the common agitation Clerambault found calm. He questioned and listened, everybody fraternised, and not being sure yet what they thought, everyone felt that they thought alike. The same questions, the same trials menaced them, but each man was no longer alone to stand or fall, and the warmth of this contact was reassuring. Class distinctions were gone; no more workmen or gentlemen, no one looked at your clothes or your hands; they only looked at your eyes where they saw the same flame of life, wavering before the same impending death. All these people were so visibly strangers to the causes of the fatality, of this catastrophe, that their innocence led them like children to look elsewhere for the guilty. It comforted and quieted their conscience. Clerambault breathed more easily when he got to Paris. A stoical and virile melancholy had succeeded to the agony of the night. He was however only at the first stage.

*From the London Daily Mail
August 5, 1914*

ALL-NIGHT SCENES

DEMONSTRATING CROWDS ROUND THE PALACE

Shortly after eleven o'clock last night the King and Queen appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, and the enthusiasm of the crowd was tremendous. At 1:30 this morning the Mall was packed with people marching and singing, and there was still a large number at 3 A. M.

THE INVASION

FROM

"A HILLTOP ON THE MARNE" BY MILDRED ALDRICH

You can get some idea of how exhausted I was on that night of Wednesday, September 2, when I tell you that I waked the next morning to find that I had a picket at my gate. I did not know until Amélie came to get my coffee ready the next morning—that was Thursday, September 3—can it be that it is only five days ago! She also brought me news that they were preparing to blow up the bridges on the Marne; that the post-office had gone; that the English were cutting the telegraph wires.

While I was taking my coffee, quietly, as if it were an everyday occurrence, she said: "Well, madame, I imagine that we are going to see the Germans. Père is breaking an opening into the underground passage under the stable, and we are going to put all we can out of sight. Will you please gather up what you wish to save, and it can be hidden there?"

I don't know that I ever told you that all the hill is honey-combed with those old subterranean passages, like the one we saw at Provins. They say that they go as far as Crésy-en-Brie, and used to connect the royal palace there with one on this hill.

Naturally I gave a decided refusal to any move of that sort, so far as I was concerned. My books and portraits are the only things I should be eternally hurt to survive. To her argument that the books could be put there,—there was room enough,—I refused to listen. I had no idea of putting my books underground to be mildewed. Besides, if it had been possible I would not have attempted it—and it distinctly was impossible. I felt a good deal like the Belgian *réfugiés* I had seen,—all so well

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dressed; if my house was going up, it was going up in its best clothes. I had just been uprooted once—a horrid operation—and I did not propose to do it again so soon. To that my mind was made up.

Luckily for me—for Amélie was as set as I was—the argument was cut short by a knock at the front door. I opened it to find standing there a pretty French girl whom I had been seeing every day, as, morning and evening, she passed my gate to and from the railway station. Sooner or later I should have told you about her if all this excitement had not put it out of my mind and my letters. I did not know her name. I had never got to asking Amélie who she was, though I was a bit surprised to find any one of her type here where I had supposed there were only farmers and peasants.

She apologized for presenting herself so informally: said she had come, "*de la parte de maman*," to ask me what I proposed to do. I replied at once, "I am staying."

She looked a little surprised: said her mother wished to do the same, but that her only brother was with the colors; that he had confided his young wife and two babies to her, and that the Germans were so brutal to children that she did not dare risk it.

"Of course, you know," she added, "that everyone has left Couilly; all the shops are closed, and nearly everyone has gone from Voisins and Quincy. The mayor's wife left last night. Before going she came to us and advised us to escape at once, and even found us a horse and cart—the trains are not running. So mother thought that, as you were a foreigner, and all alone, we ought not to go without at least offering you a place in the wagon—the chance to go with us."

I was really touched, and told her so, but explained that I should stay. She was rather insistent—said her mother would be so distressed at leaving me alone with only a little group of women and children about me, who might, at the last moment, be panic-stricken.

I explained to her as well as I could that I was alone in the

CHRISTMAS DAY

FROM

"WAY OF REVELATION" BY WILFRID EWART

November went by, December came and Christmas approached. All settled down mechanically because inevitably to that mode of life unto which it had pleased God and their country to call them. Life divided itself definitely into two phases—the eight days spent half in the firing-line and half in reserve billets, and the eight days spent in the comparatively comfortable farmhouses nine miles back. Thus every week or so they tramped the long straight road through La Gorgue and Estaires: forward with philosophical resignation, rearward, tired, mud-stained, and optimistic. Then, indeed, the column would be noisy with jokes and comic songs, buoyed by anticipation of enhanced freedom amid semi-civilized surroundings. At Merville, there were formal drill-parades and occasional route marches; there were also football matches, concerts, rides, dinner-parties. But after a while these amusements palled. Concerts became tame when the comic man had sung his customary song and the sentimentalist had delivered his love lyrics, the quartet had done their hearty part, the sketch-man had given his imitation, and the duologue had provoked appropriate laughter for the eighth or ninth time. Riding horseback was hardly worth while during that muddy winter, on the narrow *pavé* roads and amid the ceaseless traffic; it was not a riding country. And the dinner-parties—well, they were pretty much alike after all, involving much drinking, much cigarette-smoking, a great deal of "shop," and the rather redundant jokes about women. What Adrian Knoyle looked forward to and enjoyed were his long walks with Eric through

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country however uninteresting, upon afternoons however depressing in their speaking sense of the dead-weight of war, the negation of life, and the circumvention of hope. Then together they would contrive to create out of their never-flagging conversation an atmosphere that lifted them above their surroundings, took them back into the past and even led them towards possibilities of a future. For all his loathing of war and everything connected with it, Adrian was not "up against it." The thing was inevitable, it was an experience, nothing would alter it. On the other hand, he was sensible of his good fortune in having what others lacked—his association with Eric. He saw always before him the rather pathetic figure of Cornwallis who had to plough a lonelier furrow than he, and a bitterer one; Cornwallis in whom Adrian felt many qualities akin; Cornwallis who was indeed "up against it."

So Christmas came—with its formal message of "Peace on earth and goodwill towards men"—to the drab and motley crew in the trenches.

And soon after midnight, as though to herald the birth of the Saviour in the speaking voice of that sinister time, the guns burst forth in a thudding, banging, booming chorus, the sky became livid with gun-flashes, the German trenches glowed with bursting shells and upward-springing sparks. A Corps bombardment had been ordained, and for miles to north and south every gun fired. Adrian Knoyle, passing on his round of the outposts, stood spellbound by this midnight vision of the Inferno, by the grotesqueness of this irony, this voice of Terror incarnate that ushered in the Christmas dawn.

Silence succeeded thunder, a silence in which the iron-shod ground alone responded to the frosty glitter of the stars. Morning broke with a grey sky lowering upon the brown world, with its spectral trees, its leaning crosses, its white husk of a church-tower. Here and there, wisps of moist and vapoury winter mist lingered mournfully, magnifying every feature of the landscape. Smoke of breakfast fires rose above the German breast-works. A black frost still bound the earth. From either side of

a belt of ashen grey-green grass, reddened in places by rusting wire and stakes, the two interminable lines of trenches stared at one another grimly.

It was here that British and Germans met. And where Knoyle watched in the bay of the trench, even as the grey and khaki figures stood up and waved to each other, a shot broke the stillness, and a platoon-sergeant who had long been his friend, tumbled back into the trench. There he lay at full length, palpitating and bleeding, yet uncannily natural in the mud until someone brought a sandbag and covered up his face.

To Adrian, that was a curiously shocking and disillusioning experience. After it, the atmosphere of "Christmas," which even war could not entirely disperse, ceased to have any meaning for him. This sudden annihilation of a man with whom a moment before he had spoken, was like the tumbling of a last ideal in a catastrophically falling world. And there was something else. Out on the wire in front hung a queer, grey object. It was only half there; it looked as if a knob of wood, painted blue, had been stuck on a bone. Every time the wind stirred, the grey shreds flapped.

Adrian and Eric watched the scene between the trenches in silence. They had drawn their revolvers, but the effort to hold back even their well-disciplined men was without avail. There was nothing to be done. An insurgent common impulse of the combatants prevailed, and grey and khaki swarmed out to meet each other—one or two Germans in white overalls or smocks among them—at the willow-lined stream. They crossed it and mingled in a haphazard throng. They talked and gesticulated, they shook hands. They patted each other on the shoulder, laughed like schoolboys, and out of sheer lightheartedness leapt across the trickle of water. An Englishman fell in, and a German helped him out amid laughter that echoed back on the crisp air to the trenches. They exchanged cigars and sausage and *sauerkraut* and concentrated coffee, for cigarettes and bully beef and ration biscuits and tobacco. They exchanged experi-

ences and compliments and comparisons, addresses and good wishes—and even hopes and fears.

So was Christmas Day celebrated upon the battlefield.

There appeared after a quarter-of-an-hour two German officers who wished to take photographs—a request which the men refused. "Our artillery will open on you in exactly five minutes," they retorted. "Get back to your trenches or take the consequences."

And the trench-world was lifeless, unpeopled once more.

The guns thudded again, this time from behind the Aubers Ridge; shells crashed upon all the roads. Fountains of earth and dust and masonry shot skyward around the ruined village; there were death and wounds for those who lingered in the open. Only the rifles remained silent. Morning passed. Silver and still, the afternoon waned into winter's early dusk. Frost gripped again with night, and along both lines of trenches torch-like fires burned. Extra rum was issued. There were sounds of singing.

* * * * *

In a low cave or structure roofed with corrugated iron and lit by four candles stuck in bottles, the floor of which was some two feet deep in water—Adrian Knoyle and Arthur Cornwallis sat together. Walker was on leave, Eric Sinclair going his rounds. In front of each was a white enameled mug containing port-wine. They were smoking.

"That was a funny show today," observed Adrian.

"It was," answered Cornwallis ruminatingly. "I've been thinking a lot about it."

"What do you make of it?"

There was a moment's silence.

"It was—astounding."

"But how do you explain it—psychologically?"

"I think it was some sort of reaction: reaction of character, of human nature, of fundamental truth and order and proportion against the disproportion and unreality and superficiality

overlaying our old conception of civilization." The youth spoke very earnestly. He was himself with Adrian—and with no one else in the battalion. "Reaction of the best against the worst in human nature. . . . Have you noticed it—only the *real* things seem to come uppermost in war, Adrian? I mean reality seems to reveal one to oneself, drags one out of oneself, and the fundamental truth in people seems to show up in face of it and in spite of forms. In peace-time we were always getting across—I mean misunderstanding—one another, weren't we? And we were always misunderstanding—life. We saw each other through a glass darkly, but now—face to face. Now we know even as also we are known."

Leaning his elbows on the table, Cornwallis peered with great gravity at his friend through his steel-rimmed spectacles. Both were caked in mud, and wore two days' growth of beard.

"Yes, my dear Arthur, but"—Adrian looked puzzled—"I confess I don't get you ——"

"The impulse at the back of it, the inspiration of the thing. Could one have imagined it? These chaps pouring out over the parapets into No Man's Land to shake hands, to laugh and joke and exchange presents and—their own dead lying around. One has heard of the French and British drinking at the same stream in the Peninsula but—that was nothing to this! When you come to think of it, it's tremendous—amazing. Of course I'm no soldier, and the disciplinary part of it is of secondary interest to me. What that five minutes' affair this morning brought out, to my mind, was the triumph of fundamental good in the average individual, who in this case is the private soldier, over—the other thing. It was a revelation. It was finer than any church service or any Christmassy sentiment, because it was a spontaneous human thing. To me it's an unforgettable experience."

"Yes—that's interesting," said his companion slowly. "I'm glad to have seen it, too, though war never struck me as anything but utterly damnable, utterly destructive, and utterly

meaningless. But—yes, there may be some bigger thing at the back of it.”

Neither spoke for several minutes.

“Well—I dunno,” Adrian presently muttered, abstractedly lighting a cigarette. “I mean war and death and the hurt of it—and all. I feel as if it isn’t sane sometimes—can’t be true.”

“It isn’t, thank God,” exclaimed Cornwallis devoutly. (He had, by the way, evinced a habit that was a source of amusement to some of his brother-officers and of admiration to others, of kneeling down every evening wherever he happened to be and saying his prayers.) “It isn’t. The only life that counts is the life one lives in one’s own mind.”

The sandbag that did duty as a curtain over the entrance was drawn aside, and Eric stumbled in.

“I suppose you’re both drunk,” he said. “I want a drink, anyway. It’s too bloody cold for words. . . . They’re singing over in the German lines.”

He took off his heavy fleece-lined waterproof, sat down on a plank poised between two boxes, and poured himself out some port-wine. He raised the mug to his lips:

“Here’s to each of you and here’s to all of us!”

They drank this somewhat complicated toast, and then the company-commander said:

“Arthur, will you take a walk round now? One of us ought to be about, or the Boche may play some dirty trick under cover of all that joy-making.”

For several minutes after they were left alone together the old friends said no word. Speech to them was at all times superfluous. Then Adrian proposed a toast.

“To those we love best and to those who love us!”

“Very nice,” murmured Eric.

They drank in silence. . . .

Adrian’s thoughts had suddenly taken a bright turn. He realized that three months had imperceptibly passed and that only two more separated him from Rosemary. The rest—lay with Fate.

Crump! Crump! Thud! Thud!

Muffled by the earthen walls came the hollow sound of shells bursting. The two officers crawled out, but silence had fallen again except in the direction of the German trenches where a chorus of guttural voices was chanting *Die Wacht am Rhein*.

BAPTISM OF FIRE

FROM

"MEN IN WAR" BY ANDREAS LATZKO

The company rested for half an hour at the edge of the woods. Then Captain Marschner gave the command to start. He was pale, in spite of the killing heat, and he turned his eyes aside when he gave Lieutenant Weixler instructions that in ten minutes every man should be ready for the march without fail.

He had really forced his own hand in giving the order. For now he knew very well, there could be no delay. Whenever he left Weixler loose on the privates, everything went like clockwork. They trembled before this lad of barely twenty as though he were the devil incarnate. And sometimes it actually seemed to the captain himself as though there were something uncanny about that overgrown, bony figure. Never, by any chance, did a spark of warmth flash from those small, piercing eyes, which always mirrored a flickering unrest and gleamed as though from fever. The one young thing in his whole personality was the small, shy moustache above the compressed lips, which never opened except to ask in a mean, harsh way for some soldier to be punished. For almost a year Captain Marschner had lived side by side with him and had never yet heard him laugh, knew nothing of his family, nor from where he came, nor whether he had any ties at all. He spoke rarely, in brief, quick sentences, and brought out his words in a hiss, like the seething of a suppressed rage; and his only topic was the service or the war, as though outside these two things there was nothing else in the world worth talking about.

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And this man, of all others, fate had tricked by keeping him in the hinterland for the whole first year of the war. The war had been going on for eleven months and a half, and Lieutenant Weixler had not yet seen an enemy. At the very outset, when only a few miles across the Russian frontier, typhus had caught him before he had fired a single shot. Now at last he was going to face the enemy!

Captain Marschner knew that the young man had a private's rifle dragged along for his own use, and had sacrificed all his savings for special field-glasses in order to be quite on the safe side and know exactly how many enemy lives he had snuffed out. Since they had come within close sound of the firing he had grown almost merry, even talkative, impelled by a nervous zeal, like an enthusiastic hunter who has picked up the trail. The captain saw him going in and out among the massed men, and turned away, hating to see how the fellow plagued his poor weary men, and went at them precisely like a sheep dog gathering in the herd, barking shrilly all the while. Long before the ten minutes were up, the company would be in formation, Weixler's impatience guaranteed that. And then—then there would be no reason any more for longer delay, no further possibility of putting off the fatal decision.

Captain Marschner took a deep breath and looked up at the sky with wide-open eyes that had a peculiarly intent look in them. In the foreground, beyond the steep hill that still hid the actual field of battle from view, the invisible machine guns were beating in breathless haste; and scarcely a fathom above the edge of the slope small, yellowish-white packages floated in thick clusters, like snowballs flung high in the air—the smoke of the barrage fire through which he had to lead his men.

It was not a short way. Two kilometers still from the farther spur of the hill to the entrance of the communication trenches, and straight across open fields without cover of any kind. Assuredly no small task for a company of the last class of reservists, for respectable family men who had been in the field but a few hours, and who were only now to smell powder

for the first time and receive their baptism of fire. For Weixler, whose mind was set on nothing but the medal for distinguished service, which he wanted to obtain as soon as possible—for a twenty-year-old fighting cock who fancied the world rotated about his own, most important person and had had no time to estimate the truer values of life—for him it might be no more than an exciting promenade, a new sting to the nerves, a fine way of becoming thoroughly conscious of one's personality and placing one's fearlessness in a more brilliant light. Probably he had long been secretly deriding his old captain's indecision and had cursed the last halt because it forced him to wait another half hour to achieve his first deed of heroism.

Marschner mowed down the tall blades of grass with his riding whip and from time to time glanced at his company surreptitiously. He could tell by the way the men dragged themselves to their feet with a sort of resistance, like children roused from sleep, that they fully understood where they were now to go. The complete silence in which they packed their bundles and fell into line made his heart contract.

Ever since the beginning of the war, he had been preparing himself for this moment without relax. He had brooded over it day and night; had told himself a thousand times that where a higher interest is at stake, the misery of the individual counts for nothing, and a conscientious leader must armor himself with indifference. And now he stood there and observed with terror how all his good resolutions crumbled, and nothing remained in him but an impassioned, boundless pity for these driven home-keepers, who prepared themselves with such quiet resignation. It was as if they were taking their life into their hands like a costly vessel in order to carry it into battle and cast it at the feet of the enemy, as though the least thing they owned was that which would soon be crashing into fragments.

His friends, among whom he was known as "Uncle Marschner," would not have dared to suggest his sending a rabbit he had reared to the butcher or dragging a dog that had won his affection to the pound. And now he was to drive into shrapnel

fire men whom he himself had trained to be soldiers and had had under his own eyes for months, men whom he knew as he did his own pockets. Of what avail were subtle or deep reflections now? He saw nothing but the glances of dread and beseeching that his men turned on him, asking protection, as though they believed that their captain could prescribe a path even for bullets and shells. And now was he to abuse their confidence? Was he to marshal these bearded children to death and not feel any emotion? Only two days before he had seen them surrounded by their little ones, saying good-bye to their sobbing wives. Was he to march on without caring if one or another of them was hit and fell over and rolled in agony in his blood? Whence was he to take the strength for such hardness of heart? From that higher interest? It had faded away. It was impalpable. It was too much a matter of mere words, too much mere sound for him to think that it could fool his soldiers, who looked forward to the barrage fire in dread, with homeward-turned souls.

Lieutenant Weixler, red-cheeked and radiant, came and shouted in his face that the company was ready. It struck the captain like a blow below the belt. It sounded like a challenge. The captain could not help hearing in it the insolent question, "Well, why aren't you as glad of the danger as I am?" Every drop of Captain Marschner's blood rose to his temples. He had to look aside and his eyes wandered involuntarily up to the shrapnel clouds, bearing a prayer, a silent invocation to those senseless things up there rattling down so indiscriminately, a prayer that they would teach this cold-blooded boy suffering, convince him that he was vulnerable.

But a moment later he bowed his head in shame. His anger grew against the man who had been able to arouse such a feeling in him.

"Thank you. Let the men stand at rest. I must look after the horses once more," he said in measured tones, with a forced composure that soothed him. He did not intend to be hustled, now less than ever. He was glad to see the lieutenant give a

start, and he smiled to himself with quiet satisfaction at the indignant face, the defiant "Yes, sir," said in a voice no longer so loud and so clear, but coming through gnashed teeth from a contracted throat. The boy was for once in his turn to experience how it feels to be held in check. He was so fond of intoxicating himself with his own power at the cost of the privates, triumphing, as though it were the force of his own personality that lorded it over them and not the rule of the service that was always backing him.

Captain Marschner walked back to the woods deliberately, doubly glad of the lesson he had just given Weixler because it also meant a brief respite for his old boys. Perhaps a shell would hurtle down into the earth before their noses, and so these few minutes would save the lives of twenty men. Perhaps? It might turn out just the other way, too. Those very minutes—ah, what was the use of speculating? It was better not to think at all! He wanted to help the men as much as he could, but he could not be a savior to any of them.

And yet, perhaps? One man had just come rushing up to him from the woods. This one man he was managing to shelter for the present. He and six others were to stay behind with the horses and the baggage. Was it an injustice to detail this particular man? All the other non-commissioned officers were older and married. The short, fat man with the bow-legs even had six children at home. Could he justify himself at the bar of his conscience for leaving this young, unmarried man here in safety?

With a furious gesture the captain interrupted his thoughts. He would have liked best to catch hold of his own chest and give himself a sound shaking. Why could he not rid himself of that confounded brooding and pondering the right and wrong of things? Was there any justice at all left here, here in the domain of the shells that spared the worst and laid low the best? Had he not quite made up his mind to leave his conscience, his over-sensitiveness, his ever-wakeful sympathy, and all his superfluous thoughts at home along with his civilian's

clothes packed away in camphor in the house where he lived in peace times?

All these things were part of the civil engineer, Rudolf Marschner, who once upon a time had been an officer, but who had returned to school when thirty years old to exchange the trade of war, into which he had wandered in the folly of youth, for a profession that harmonized better with his gentle, thoughtful nature. That this war had now, twenty years later, turned him into a soldier again was a misfortune, a catastrophe which had overtaken him, as it had all the others, without any fault of his or theirs. Yet there was nothing to do but to reconcile himself to it; and first of all he had to avoid that constant hair-splitting. Why torment himself so with questions? Some man had to stay behind in the woods as a guard. The commander had decided on the young sergeant, and the young sergeant would stay behind. That settled it.

The painful thing was the way the fellow's face so plainly showed his emotion. His eyes moistened and looked at the captain in doglike gratitude. Disgusting, simply disgusting! And what possessed the man to stammer out something about his mother? He was to stay behind because the service required it; his mother had nothing to do with it. She was safe in Vienna—and here it was war.

The captain told the man so. He could not let him think it was a bit of good fortune, a special dispensation, not to have to go into battle.

Captain Marschner felt easier the minute he had finished scolding the crushed sinner. His conscience was now quite clear, just as though it had really been by chance that he had placed the man at that post. But the feeling did not last very long. The silly fellow would not give up adoring him as his savior. And when he stammered, "I take the liberty of wishing you good luck, Captain," standing in stiff military attitude, but in a voice hoarse and quivering from suppressed tears, such fervor, such ardent devotion radiated from his wish that the

captain suddenly felt a strange emptiness again in the pit of his stomach, and he turned sharply and walked away.

Now he knew. Now he could approximately calculate all the things Weixler had observed in him. Now he could guess how the fellow must have made secret fun of his sensitiveness, if this simple man, this mere carpenter's journeyman, could guess his innermost thoughts. For he had not spoken to him once—simply the night before last, at the entrainment in Vienna, he had furtively observed his leavetaking from his mother. How had the confounded fellow come to suspect that the wizened, shrunken little old hag whose skin, dried by long living, hung in a thousand loose folds from her cheek-bones, had made such an impression on his captain? The man himself certainly did not know how touching it looked when the tiny mother gazed up at him from below and stroked his broad chest with her trembling hand because she could not reach his face. No one could have betrayed to the soldier that since then, whenever his company commander looked at him, he could not help seeing the lemon-hued, thick-veined hand with its knotted, distorted fingers, which had touched the rough, hairy cloth with such ineffable love. And yet, somehow, the rascal had discovered that this hand floated above him protectingly, that it prayed for him and had softened the heart of his officer.

Marschner tramped across the meadow in rage against himself. He was as ashamed as though some one had torn a mask from his face. Was it as easy as that to see through him, then, in spite of all the trouble he took? He stopped to get his breath, hewed at the grass again with his riding whip, and cursed aloud. Oh, well, he simply couldn't act a part, couldn't step out of his skin suddenly, even though there was a world war a thousand times over. He used to let his nephew and nieces twist him round their fingers, and laughed good-naturedly when they did it. In a single day he could not change into a fire-eater and go merrily upon the man-hunt. What an utterly mad idea it was, too, to try to cast all people into the same mould! No one dreamed of making a soft-hearted philanthro-

pist of Weixler; and he was supposed so lightly to turn straight into a blood-thirsty militarist. He was no longer twenty, like Weixler, and these sad, silent men who had been so cruelly uprooted from their lives were each of them far more to him than a mere rifle to be sent to the repair shop if broken, or to be indifferently discarded if smashed beyond repair. Whoever had looked on life from all sides and reflected upon it could not so easily turn into the mere soldier, like his lieutenant, who had not been humanized yet, nor seen the world from any point of view but the military school and the barracks.

Ah, yes, if conditions still were as at the beginning of the war, when none but young fellows, happy to be off on an adventure, hallooed from the train windows. If they left any dear ones at all behind, they were only their parents, and here at last was a chance to make a great impression on the old folks. Then Captain Marschner would have held his own as well as anyone, as well even as the strict disciplinarian, Lieutenant Weixler, perhaps even better. Then the men marched two or three weeks before coming upon the enemy, and the links that bound them to life broke off one at a time. They underwent a thousand difficulties and deprivations, until under the stress of hunger and thirst and weariness they gradually forgot everything they had left far—far behind. In those days hatred of the enemy who had done them all that harm smouldered and flared higher every day, while actual battle was a relief after the long period of passive suffering.

But now things went like lightning. Day before yesterday in Vienna still—and now, with the farewell kisses still on one's lips, scarcely torn from another's arms, straight into the fire. And not blindly, unsuspectingly, like the first ones. For these poor devils now the war had no secrets left. Each of them had already lost some relative or friend; each had talked to wounded men, had seen mutilated, distorted invalids, and knew more about shell wounds, gas grenades, and liquid fire than artillery generals or staff physicians had known before the war.

And now it was the captain's lot to lead precisely these

clairvoyants, these men so rudely torn up by the roots—he, the retired captain, the civilian, who at first had had to stay at home training recruits. Now that it was a thousand times harder, now his turn had come to be a leader, and he dared not resist the task to which he was not equal. On the contrary, as a master of decency, he had been forced to push his claims so that others who had already shed their blood out there should not have to go again for him.

A dull, impotent rage came over him when he stepped up in front of his men ranged in deep rows. They stared at his lips in breathless suspense. What was he to say to them? It went against him to reel off compliantly the usual patriotic phrases that forced themselves on one's lips as though dictated by an outside power. For months he had carried about the defiant resolve not to utter the prescribed "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*," whatever the refusal might cost. Nothing was so repulsive to him as singing the praises of the sacrifice of one's life. It was a juggler's trick to cry out that some one was dying while inside the booth murder was being done.

He clenched his teeth and lowered his eyes shyly before the wall of pallid faces. The foolish, childlike prayer, "Take care of us!" gazed at him maddeningly from all those eyes. It drove him to sheer despair.

If only he could have driven them back to their own people and gone ahead alone! With a jerk he threw out his chest, fixed his eyes on a medal that a man in the middle of the long row was wearing, and said:

"Boys, we're going to meet the enemy now. I count upon each of you to do his duty, faithful to the oath you have sworn to the flag. I shall ask nothing of you that the interest of our fatherland and your own interest therefore and the safety of your wives and children do not absolutely require. You may depend upon that. Good luck! And now—forward, march!"

Without being conscious of it, he had imitated Weixler's voice, his unnaturally loud, studiously incisive tone of command, so as to drown the emotion that fluttered in his throat. At the

last words he faced about abruptly and without looking around tossed the final command over his shoulder for the men to deploy, and with his head sunk upon his chest he began the ascent, taking long strides. Behind him boots crunched and food pails clattered against some other part of the men's accouterment. Soon, too, there came the sound of the gasping of heavily laden men; and a thick, suffocating smell of sweat settled upon the marching company.

Captain Marschner was ashamed. A real physical nausea at the part he had just played overcame him. What was there left for these simple people to do, these bricklayers and engineers and cultivators of the earth, who, bent over their daily tasks, had lived without vision into the future—what was there left for them to do when the grand folks, the learned people, their own captain with the three golden stars on his collar, assured them it was their duty and a most praiseworthy thing to shoot Italian bricklayers and engineers and farmers into fragments? They went—gasping behind him, and he—he led them on! Led them, against his inner conviction, because of his pitiful cowardice, and asked them to be courageous and contemptuous of death. He had talked them into it, had abused their confidence, had made capital of their love for their wives and children, because if he acted in the service of a lie, there was a chance of his continuing to live and even coming back home safe again, while if he stuck to the truth he believed in there was the certainty of his being stood up against a wall and shot.

He staked their lives and his own life on the throw of loaded dice because he was too cowardly to contemplate the certain loss of the game for himself alone.

The sun beat down murderously on the steep, treeless declivity. The sound of shells bursting off at a distance, of tattooing machine guns, and roaring artillery on their own side was now mingled with the howling sound of shots whizzing through the air and coming closer and closer. And still the top of the ridge had not been reached! The captain felt his breath fail him, stopped and raised his hand. The men were to get their

wind back for a moment; they had been on the march since four o'clock that morning; they had done bravely with their forty-year-old legs. He could tell that by his own.

Full of compassion he looked upon the bluish red faces streaming with sweat, and gave a start when he saw Lieutenant Weixler approaching in long strides. Why could he no longer see that face without a sense of being attacked, of being caught at the throat by a hatred he could hardly control? He ought really to be glad to have the man at his side there. One glance into those coldly watchful eyes was sufficient to subdue any surge of compassion.

"With your permission, Captain," he heard him rasp out, "I'm going over to the left wing. A couple of fellows there that don't please me at all. Especially Simmel, the red-haired dog. He's already pulling his head in when a shrapnel burst over there."

Marschner was silent. The red-haired dog—Simmel? Wasn't that the red-haired end-man in the second line, the paperhanger and upholsterer who had carried that exquisite little girl in his arms up to the last moment—until Weixler had brutally driven him off to the train? It seemed to the captain as though he could still see the children's astonished upward look at the mighty man who could scold their own father.

"Let him be, he'll get used to it by and by," he said mildly. "He's got his children on his mind and isn't in a hurry to make orphans of them. The men can't all be heroes. If they just do their duty."

Weixler's face became rigid. His narrow lips tightened again into that hard, contemptuous expression which the captain felt each time like the blow of a whip.

"He's not supposed to think of his brats now, but of his oath to the flag, of the oath he swore to his Majesty, his Commander-in-Chief! You just told them so yourself, Captain."

"Yes, yes, I know I did," Captain Marschner nodded absent-mindedly, and let himself slide down slowly on the grass. It was not surprising that this boy spoke as he did, but what *was*

surprising was that twenty-five years ago, when he himself had come from the military academy all aglow with enthusiasm, the phrases "oath to the flag," "his Majesty, and Commander-in-Chief" had seemed to him, too, to be the sum and substance of all things. In those days he would have been like this lad and would have gone to war full of joyous enthusiasm. But now that he had grown deaf to the fanfaronade of such words and clearly saw the framework on which they were constructed, how was he to keep pace with the young who were a credulous echo of every speech they heard? How was he suddenly to make bold reckless blades of his excellent, comfortable Philistines, whom life had so thoroughly tamed that at home they were capable of going hungry and not snatching at treasures that were separated from them by only a thin partition of glass? What was the use of making the same demands upon the upholsterer Simmel as upon the young lieutenant, who had never striven for anything else than to be named first for fencing, wrestling, and courageous conduct? Have mercenaries ever been famous for their morals, or good solid citizens for their fearlessness? Can one and the same men be twenty and forty-five years old at the same time?

Crouching there, his head between his fists, the captain became so absorbed in these thoughts that he lost all sense of the time and the place, and the lieutenant's attempts to rouse him by passing by several times and hustling the men about loudly remained unsuccessful. But at last the sound of a horse's hoofs brought him back to consciousness. An officer was galloping along the path that ran about the hill half way from the top. On his head he wore the tall cap that marked him as a member of the general staff. He reined in his horse, asked courteously where the company was bound and raised his eyebrows when Captain Marschner explained the precise position they were to take.

"So that's where you're going?" he exclaimed, and his grimace turned into a respectful smile. "Well, I congratulate you! You're going into the very thickest of the lousy mess. For

three days the Italians have been trying to break through at that point. I wouldn't hold you back for a moment! The poor devils there now will make good use of the relief. Good-bye and good luck!"

Gracefully he touched the edge of his cap. His horse cried out under the pressure of his spurs, and he was gone.

The captain stared after him as though dazed. "Well, I congratulate you!" The words echoed in his ears. A man, well mounted, thoroughly rested, pink and neat as though he had just come out of a band-box, meets two hundred fellowmen dedicated to death; sees them sweaty, breathless, on the very edge of destruction; knows that in another hour many a face now turned upon him curiously will lie in the grass distorted by pain or rigid in death—and he says, smiling, "Well, I congratulate you!" And he rides on and no shudder of awe creeps down his back, no shadow touches his forehead!

The meeting will fade from the man's memory without leaving a trace. At dinner that night nothing will remind him of the comrade whose hand, perhaps, he was the last one to press. To these chosen ones, who from their safe positions in the rear, drive the columns on into the fire, what matters a single company's march to death? And the miserable, red-haired upholsterer here was trembling, pulling back his head, tearing his eyes open mightily, as though the fate of the world depended upon whether he would ever again carry his little red-haired girl in his arms. To be sure, if one viewed the whole matter in the proper perspective—as a member of the general staff riding by, who kept his vision fixed on the aim, that is, the victory that sooner or later would be celebrated to the clinking of glasses—why, from that point of view Weixler was right! It must make him indignant to have events of such epic grandeur made ridiculous by such a chicken-hearted creature as Simmel and degraded into a doleful family affair.

"The poor devils there now!" A cold shiver ran down Marschner's back. The staff officer's words suddenly evoked a vision of the shattered, blood-soaked trench where the men,

exhausted to the point of death, were yearning for him as for a redeemer. He arose, with a groan, seized by a grim, embittered hatred against this age. Not a single mesh in the net left open! Every minute of respite granted his own men was theft or even murder committed against the men out there. He threw up his arms and strode forward, determined to rest no more until he reached the trench that he and his company were to man and hold. His face was pale and careworn, and each time he caught the exasperating rasp of his lieutenant's voice from the other wing crying "Forward! Forward!" it was drawn by a tortured smile.

Suddenly he stood still. Into the rattle, the boom, the explosion of artillery there leaped suddenly a new tone. It rose clearly above the rest of the din, which had almost ceased to penetrate the consciousness. It approached with such a shrill sound, with such indescribable swiftness, with so fierce a threat, that the sound seemed to be visible, as though you could actually see a screaming semicircle rise in the air, bite its way to one's very forehead, and snap there with a short, hard, whip-like crack. A few feet away a little whirl of dust was puffed up, and invisible hail stones slapped rattling down upon the grass.

A shrapnel!

Captain Marschner looked round startled, and to his terror saw all the men's eyes fixed on him, as though asking his advice. A peculiar smile of shame and embarrassment hovered about their lips.

It was his business to set the men a good example, to march on carelessly without stopping or looking up. After all it made no difference what one did one way or the other. There was no possibility of running away or hiding. It was all a matter of chance. Chance was the one thing that would protect a man. So the thing to do was to go ahead as if not noticing anything. If there was only one man in the company who did not seem to care, the others would be put to shame and would mutually control each other, and then everything was won. He could

tell by his own experience how the feeling of being watched on all sides upheld him. Had he been by himself, he might have thrown himself on the ground and tried to hide behind a stone no matter how small.

"Nothing but a spent shot! Forward, boys!" he cried, the thought of being a support to his men almost making him cheerful. But the words were not out of his mouth when other shots whizzed through the air. In spite of himself, his body twitched backward and his head sank lower between his shoulders. That made him stiffen his muscles and grind his teeth in rage. It was not the violence with which the scream flew toward him that made him twitch. It was the strange precision with which the circle of the thing's flight (exactly like a diagram at a lecture on artillery) curved in front of him. It was this unnatural feeling of perceiving a sound more with the eye than with the ear that made the will powerless.

Something had to be done to create the illusion of not being wholly defenseless.

"Forward, run!" he shouted at the top of his voice, holding his hands to his mouth to make a megaphone.

His men stormed forward as if relieved. The tension left their faces; each one was somehow busied with himself, stumbled, picked himself up, grasped some piece of equipment that was coming loose; and in the general snorting and gasping, the whistle of the approaching shells passed almost unobserved.

After a while it came to Captain Marschner's consciousness that some one was hissing into his left ear. He turned his head and saw Weixler running beside him, scarlet in the face.

"What is it?" he asked, involuntarily slowing down from a run to a walk.

"Captain, I beg to announce that an example ought to be instituted! That coward Simmel is demoralizing the whole company. At each shrapnel he yells out, 'Jesus, my Savior,' and flings himself to the ground. He is frightening the rest of the men. He ought to be made an example of, a ——"

A charge of four shrapnels whizzed into the middle of his

sentence. The screaming seemed to have grown louder, more piercing. The captain felt as though a monstrous, glittering scythe were flashing in a steep curve directly down on his skull. But this time he did not dare to move an eyelash. His limbs contracted and grew taut, as in the dentist's chair when the forceps grip the tooth. At the same time, he examined the lieutenant's face closely, curious to see how he was taking the fire for which he had so yearned. But he seemed not to be noticing the shrapnels in the least. He was stretching his neck to inspect the left wing.

"There!" he cried indignantly. "D'you see, Captain? The miserable cur is down on his face again. I'll go for him!"

Before Marschner could hold him back, he had dashed off. But half-way he stopped, stood still, and then turned back in annoyance.

"The fellow's hit," he announced glumly, with an irritated shrug of his shoulders.

"Hit?" the captain burst out, and an ugly, bitter taste suddenly made his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth. He observed the frosty calm in Weixler's features, the unsympathetic, indifferent look, and his hand started upward. He could have slapped him, his insensibility was so maddening and that careless "the fellow's hit" hurt so. The image of the dear little girl with the bright ribbon in her red curls flashed into his mind, and also the vision of a distorted corpse holding a child in his arms. As through a veil he saw Weixler hasten past him to catch up with the company, and he ran to where the two stretcher-bearers kneeled next to something invisible.

The wounded man lay on his back. His flaming red hair framed a greenish grey face ghostly in its rigidity. A few minutes before Captain Marschner had seen the man still running—the same face still full of vitality—from heat and excitement. His knees gave way. The sight of that change, so incomprehensible in its suddenness, gripped at his vitals like an icy hand. Was it possible? Could all the life blood recede in the twinkling of an eye, and a strong, hale man crumble

into ruins in a few moments? What powers of hell slept in such pieces of iron that between two breaths they could perform the work of many months of illness?

"Don't be frightened, Simmel!" the captain stammered, supporting himself on the shoulder of one of the stretcher-bearers. "They'll carry you back to the baggage!" He forced the lie out with an effort, drawing a deep breath. "You'll be the first one to get back to Vienna now!" He wanted to add something about the man's family and the little girl with the red curls, but he could not get it over his lips. He dreaded a cry from the dying man for his dear ones, and when the mouth writhing with pain opened slowly, it sent an inner tremor through the captain. He saw the eyes open, too, and he shuddered at their glassy stare, which seemed no longer to fix itself upon any bodily thing but to be looking through all those present and seeking something at a distance.

Simmel's body writhed under the forcible examination of the doctor's hands. Incomprehensible gurgling sounds arose from his torn chest streaming with blood, and his breath blew the scarlet foam at his mouth into bursting bubbles.

"Simmel! What do you want, Simmel?" Marschner besought, bending low over the wounded man. He listened intently to the broken sounds, convinced that he would have to try to catch a last message. He breathed in relief when the wandering eyes at last found their way back and fastened themselves on his face with a look of anxious inquiry in them. "Simmel!" he cried again, and grasped his hand, which trembled toward the wound. "Simmel, don't you know me?"

Simmel nodded. His eyes widened, the corners of his mouth drooped.

"It hurts—Captain—hurts so!" came from the shattered breast. To the captain it sounded like a reproach. After a short rattling sound of pain he cried out again, foaming at the mouth and with a piercing shriek of rage: "It hurts! It hurts!" He beat about with his hands and feet.

Captain Marschner jumped up.

"Carry him back," he commanded, and without knowing what he did, he put his fingers into his ears, and ran after the company, which had already reached the top of the ridge. He ran pressing his head between his hands as in a vise, reeling, panting, driven by a fear, as though the wounded man's agonized cry were pursuing him with lifted axe. He saw the shrunken body writhe, the face that had so suddenly withered, the yellowish white of the eyes. And that cry: "Captain—hurts so!" echoed within him and clawed at his breast, so that when he reached the summit he fell down, half choked, as if the ground had been dragged from under his feet.

No, he couldn't do that sort of thing! He didn't want to go on with it. He was no hangman; he was incapable of lashing men on to their death. He could not be deaf to their woe, to that childlike whimpering which stung his conscience like a bitter reproach. He stamped on the ground defiantly. Everything in him arose in rebellion against the task that called him.

Below, the field of battle stretched far out, cheerlessly grey. No tree, no patch of green. A stony waste—chopped up, crushed, dug inside out, no sign of life. The communication trenches, which started in the bottom of the valley and led to the edge of the hill, from which the wire entanglements projected, looked like fingers spread out to grasp something and clawed deep into the throttled earth. Marschner looked round again involuntarily. Behind him the green slope descended steeply to the little woods in which the baggage had been left. Farther behind the white highroad gleamed like a river framed in colored meadows. A short turn—and the greenness vanished! All life succumbed, as though roared down by the cannons, by the howling and pounding that hammered in the valley like the pulsating of a colossal fever. Shell hole upon shell hole yawned down there. From time to time thick, black pillars of earth leaped up and for moments hid small parts of this desert burned to ashes, where the cloven stumps of trees, whittled as by penknives, stuck up like a jeering challenge to the impotent imagination, a challenge to recognize in this field

of death and refuse, the landscape it once had been, before the great madness had swept over it and sown it with ruins, leaving it like a dancing floor on which two worlds had fought for a loose woman.

And into this vale of hell he was now to descend! *Live* down there five days and five nights, he and his little company of the damned, spewed down into that place, their living bodies speared on the fishing hook, bait for the enemy!

All alone, with no one near to hear him, amid the fury of the bursting shrapnel, which fell up there as thick as rain in a thunderstorm, Captain Marschner gave himself up to his rage, his impotent rage against a world that had inflicted such a thing on him. He cursed and roared out his hatred into the deaf tumult; and then he sprang up when, far below, almost in the valley already, his men emerged followed by Lieutenant Weixler, who ran behind them like a butcher's helper driving oxen to the shambles. The captain saw them hurry, saw the clouds of the explosions multiply above their heads, and on the slope in front of him saw bluish-green heaps scattered here and there, like knapsacks dropped by the way, some motionless, some twitching like great spiders—and he rushed on.

He raced like a madman down the steep slope, scarcely feeling the ground under his feet, nor hearing the rattle of the exploding shells. He flew rather than ran, stumbled over charred roots, fell, picked himself up again and darted onward, looking neither to the right nor to the left, almost with closed eyes. Now and then, as from a train window, he saw a pale, troubled face flit by. Once it seemed to him he heard a man moaning for water. But he wished to hear nothing, to see nothing. He ran on, blind and deaf, without stopping, driven by the terror of that bad, reproachful, "Hurts so!"

Only once did he halt, as though he had stepped into a trap and were held fast in an iron vise. A hand stopped him, a grey, convulsed hand with crooked fingers. It stuck up in front of him as though hewn out of stone. He saw no face, nor knew who it was that held out that dead, threatening fist. All he

knew was that two hours before, over there in the little piece of woods, that hand had still comfortably cut slices of rye bread or had written a last post-card home. And a horror of those fingers took hold of the captain and lent new strength to his limbs, so that he stormed onward in great leaps like a boy until, with throbbing sides and a red cloud before his eyes, he caught up with his company at last, way down in the valley at the entrance to the communication trenches.

Lieutenant Weixler presented himself in strictest military form and announced the loss of fourteen men. Marschner heard the ring of pride in his voice, like triumph over what had been achieved, like the rejoicing of a boy bragging of the first down on his lip and deepening the newly acquired dignity of a bass voice. What were the wounded men writhing on the slope above to this raw youth, what the red-haired coward with his whine, what the children robbed of their provider growing up to be beggars, to a life in the abyss, perhaps to a life in jail? All these were mere supers, a stage background for Lieutenant Weixler's heroism to stand out in relief. Fourteen bloody bodies lined the path he had trodden without fear. How should his eyes not radiate arrogance?

The captain hastened on, past Weixler. If only he did not have to see him, he told himself, if only he did not have to meet the contented gleam of the man's eyes. He feared his rage might master his reason and his tongue get beyond his control, and his clenched fist do its own will. But here he had to spare this man. Here Lieutenant Weixler was within his rights. He grew from moment to moment. His stature dwarfed the others. He swam upon the stream, while the others, weighed down by the burden of their riper humanity, sank like heavy clods. Here other laws obtained. The dark shaft in which they now reeled forward with trembling knees led to an island washed by a sea of death. Whoever was stranded there dared not keep anything that he used in another world. The man who was master here was the one who had kept nothing but his axe and his fist. And he was the rich one upon whose superabundance

the others depended. As Captain Marschner groped his way through the slippery trench in a daze, it became clearer and clearer to him that he must now hold on to his detested lieutenant like a treasure. Without him he would be lost.

He saw the traces of puddles of blood at his feet, and trod upon tattered, blood-soaked pieces of uniforms, on empty shells, rattling preserve tins, fragments of cannon balls. Yawning shell holes would open up suddenly, precariously bridged with half-charred boards. Everywhere the traces of frenzied devastation grinned, blackened remains of a wilderness of wires, beams, sacks, broken tools, a disorder that took one's breath away and made one dizzy—all steeped in the suffocating stench of combustion, powder smoke, and the pungent, stinging breath of the ecrasite shells. Wherever one stepped the earth had been lacerated by gigantic explosions, laboriously patched up again, once more ripped open to its very bowels, and leveled a second time, so that one reeled on unconscious, as if in a hurricane.

Crushed by the weight of his impressions, Captain Marschner crept through the trench like a worm, and his thoughts turned ever more passionately, ever more desperately to Lieutenant Weixler. Weixler alone could help him or take his place, with that grim, cold energy of his, with that blindness to everything which did not touch his own life, or which was eclipsed by the glowing vision of an Eric Weixler studded with decorations and promoted out of his turn. The captain kept looking about for him anxiously, and breathed with relief each time the urgent, rasping voice came to his ears from the rear.

The trench seemed never to be coming to an end. Marschner felt his strength giving way. He stumbled more frequently and closed his eyes with a shudder at the criss-cross traces of blood that precisely indicated the path of the wounded. Suddenly he raised his head with a jerk. A new smell struck him, a sweetish stench which kept getting stronger and stronger until at a curve of the trench wall, which swung off to the left at this point and receded semicircularly, it burst upon him like a great cloud. He

looked about, shaken by nausea, his gorge rising. In a dip in the trench he saw a pile of dirty, tattered uniforms heaped in layers and with strangely rigid outlines. It took him some time to grasp the full horror of that which towered in front of him. Fallen soldiers were lying there like gathered logs, in the contorted shapes of the last death agony. Tent flaps had been spread over them, but had slipped down and revealed the grim, stony grey caricatures, the fallen jaws, the staring eyes. The arms of those in the top tier hung earthward like parts of a trellis, and grasped at the faces of those lying below, and were already sown with the livid splotches of corruption.

Captain Marschner uttered a short, belching cry and reeled forward. His head shook as though loosened from his neck, and his knees gave way so that he already saw the ground rising up toward him, when suddenly an unknown face emerged directly in front of him and attracted his attention, and gave him back his self-control. It was a sergeant, who was staring at him silently with great, fevered, gleaming eyes in a deathly pale face. For a moment the man stood as though paralyzed, then his mouth opened wide, he clapped his hands, and jumped into the air like a dancer, and dashed off, without thinking of a salute.

"Relief!" he shouted while running.

He came to a halt before a black hole in the trench wall, like the entrance to a cave, and bent down and shouted into the opening with a ring of indescribable joy in his voice—with a rejoicing that sounded as if it came through tears:

"Relief! Lieutenant! The relief party is here!"

The captain looked after him and heard his cry. His eyes grew moist, so touching was that childlike cry of joy, that shout from out of a relieved heart. He followed the sergeant slowly, and saw—as though the cry had awakened the dead—pallid faces peering from all corners, wounded men with blood-soaked bandages, tottering figures holding their rifles. Men streamed toward him from every direction, stared at him and with speechless lips formed the word "relief," until at length one

of them roared out a piercing "hurrah," which spread like wild-fire and found an echo in unseen throats that repeated it enthusiastically. Deeply shaken, Marschner bowed his head and swiftly drew his hand across his eyes when the commandant of the trench rushed toward him from the dugout.

Nothing that betokens life was left about the man. His face was ashen, his eyes like lamps extinguished, glazed and surrounded by broad blue rims. His lids were a vivid red from sleeplessness. His hair, his beard, his clothes were encased in a thick crust of mud, so that he looked as if he had just arisen from the grave. He gave a brief, military salute, then grasped the captain's hand with hysterical joy. His hand was cold as a corpse's and sticky with sweat and dirt. And most uncanny was the contrast between this skeleton hung with clothes, this rigid death-mask of a face, and the twitching, over-excited nervousness with which the lieutenant greeted their liberator.

The words leaped like a waterfall from his cracked lips. He drew Marschner into the dugout and pushed him, stumbling and groping as if dazzled, down on an invisible something meant for a seat and began to tell his tale. He couldn't stand still for a second. He hopped about, slapped his thighs, laughed with unnatural loudness, ran up and down trippingly, threw himself on the couch in the corner, asked for a cigarette every other minute, threw it away without knowing it after two puffs, and at once asked for another.

"I tell you, three hours more," he crowed blissfully, with affected gaiety, "—three? What am I talking about. *One* hour more, and it would have been too late. D'you know how many rounds of ammunition I've got left? Eleven hundred in all! Machine guns? Run down! Telephone? Smashed since last night already! Send out a party to repair it? Impossible! Needed every man in the trench! A hundred and sixty-four of us at first. Now I've got thirty-one, eleven of them wounded so that they can't hold a rifle. Thirty-one fellows to hold the trench with! Last night there were still forty-five of us when they attacked. We drove 'em to hell, of course, but fourteen

of our men went again. We haven't had a chance to bury them yet. Didn't you see them lying out there?"

The Captain let him talk. He leaned his elbows on the primitive table, held his head between his hands, and kept silent. His eyes wandered about the dark, mouldy den, filled with the stench of a smoking little kerosene lamp. He saw the mildewed straw in the corner, the disconnected telephone at the entrance, an empty box of tinned food on which a crumpled map was spread out. He saw a mountain of rifles, bundles of uniforms, each one ticketed; and he felt how inch by inch, a dumb, icy horror arose within him and paralyzed his breathing, as though the earth overhead, upheld by only a thin scaffolding of cracked boards and threatening to fall at any moment, had already laid its intolerable weight upon his chest. And that prancing ghost, that giggling death's head, which only a week before perhaps had still been young, affected him like a nightmare. And the thought that now his turn had come to stick it out in that sepulchral vault for five or six days or a week and experience the same horrors that the man there was telling about with a laugh intensified his discouragement into a passionate, throbbing indignation which he could scarcely control any more. He could have roared out, could have jumped up, run out, and shouted to mankind from the depths of his soul asking why he had been tossed there, why he would have to lie there until he had turned into carrion or a crazy man. How could he have let himself be driven out there? He could not understand it. He saw no meaning to it all, no aim. All he saw was that hole in the earth, those rotting corpses outside, and nearby, but one step removed from all that madness, his own Vienna as he had left it only two days before, with its tramways, its show windows, its smiling people and its lighted theaters. What madness to be crouching there waiting for death with idiotic patience, to perish on the naked earth in blood and filth, like a beast, while other people, happy, clean, dressed up, sat in bright halls and listened to music, and then nestled in soft beds without fear, without danger, guarded by

a whole world, which would come down in indignation upon any who dared to harm a single hair of their heads. Had madness already stolen upon him or were the others mad?

His pulse raged as though his heart would burst if he could not relieve his soul by a loud shout.

At that very moment Lieutenant Weixler came bustling in, like the master of ceremonies at a ball. He stood stiff and straight in front of the captain, and announced that everything above was in readiness, that he had already assigned the posts and arranged the watches, and placed the machine guns. The captain looked at him and had to lower his eyes as if boxed on the ears by this tranquillity, which would suddenly wither his fury into a burning shame at himself.

Why did that man remain untouched by the great fear of death which impregnated the very air here? How was it that he could give orders and commands with the foresightedness of a mature man, while he himself crept out of sight like a frightened child and rebelled against his fate with the senseless fury of an animal at bay, instead of mastering fate as befitted his age? Was he a coward? Was he in the grip of a mean, paltry fear; was he overcome by that wretched blindness of the soul which cannot lift its vision beyond its own ego nor lose sight of its ego for the sake of an idea? Was he really so devoid of any sense for the common welfare, so utterly ruled by shortsighted selfishness, concerned with nothing but his bare, miserable existence?

No, he was not like that. He clung to his own life no more than any other man. He could have cast it away enthusiastically, and without flying banners, without ecstasy, without the world's applause, had the hostile trenches over there been filled with men like Weixler, had the combat been against such crazy hardness of soul, against catchwords fattened with human flesh, against that whole, cleverly built-up machine of force which drove those whom it was supposed to protect to form a wall to protect itself. He would have hurled himself into the fight with bare fists, unmindful of the bursting of shells, the

moans of the wounded. Oh no, he was not a coward. Not what those two men thought. He saw them wink scornfully and make fun of the unhappy old uncle of a reserve officer who sat in the corner like a bundle of misery. What did they know of his soul's bitterness? They stood there as heroes and felt the glances of their home upon them, and spoke words which, upborne by the echo of a whole world, peopled the loneliness with all the hosts of the likeminded and filled their souls with the strength of millions. And they laughed at a man who was to kill without feeling hatred and die without ecstasy, for a victory that was nothing to him but a big force which achieved its objects simply because it hit harder, not because it had justice on its side or a fine and noble aim. He had no cause to slink off, humbled by their courage.

A cold, proud defiance heartened him, so that he arose, strengthened suddenly, as if elevated by the superhuman burden that he alone carried on his shoulders. He saw the strange lieutenant still dancing about, hastily gathering up his belongings and stuffing them into his knapsack. He heard him scold his orderly and bellow at him to hurry up, in between digging up fresh details, hideous episodes, from the combats of the past few days, which Weixler devoured in breathless attention.

"What a question!" the commandant of the trench exclaimed, laughing at his audience. "Whether the Italians had heavy losses, too? Do you think we let them pepper us like rabbits? You can easily calculate what those fellows lost in their eleven attacks if we've melted down to thirty men without crawling out of our trench. Just let them go on like that a few weeks longer and they'll be at the end of their human material."

Captain Marschner had not wanted to listen. He stood bending over a map, but at the phrase, "human material," he started violently. It sounded like a taunt directed at his own thoughts, as if the two men had seen into him and had agreed with each other to give him a good lesson and show him how alone he was.

"Human material!"

In a trench, filled with the stench of dead bodies, shaken by the impact of the shells, stood two men, each himself a stake in the game, and while the dice were still being tossed for their very bones, they talked of—human material! They uttered those ruthless, shameful words without a shadow of indignation, as though it were natural for their living bodies to be no more than a gambler's chips in the hands of men who arrogated to themselves the right to play the game of gods. Without hesitating they laid their one, irrevocable life at the feet of a power that could not prove whether it had known how to place the stakes rightly except by their dead bodies. And the men who were speaking that way were officers! So where was there a gleam of hope?

Out there, among the simple men, perhaps, the plain cannon fodder? They were now crouching resignedly in their places, thinking of home and each of them still feeling himself a man. He was drawn to his men, to their dull, silent sadness, to their true greatness, which without pathos and without solemnity, in everyday clothes, as it were, patiently awaited the hero's death.

Outside the dugout stood the remnants of the relieved company ready for the march, always two men abreast with a dead comrade on a tent canvas between them. A long procession, profoundly stirring in its silent expectancy, into which the hissing and crackling of shrapnel and the thunder of grenades fell like a warning from above to those who still had their lives. Bitterly, Marschner clenched his fist at this insatiableness.

At that moment the pale sergeant stepped in front of the place where the dead had been piled and frightened Marschner out of his thoughts.

"Captain, I beg to announce that besides the fourteen dead there are three seriously wounded men who can't walk—Italians. I have no bearers left for them."

"We'll leave them to you as a souvenir," the trench commandant, who was just leaving the dugout with Weixler, laughed in his maundering way. "You can have them dug in at

night up there among the communication trenches, Captain. When it gets dark, the Italians direct their barrage fire farther back, and give you a chance to climb out. To be sure, they won't lie in peace there under the earth very long, because the shells rip everything open right away again. I've had to have my poor ensign buried three times over already.

"How did they get in here anyhow?" Weixler asked, pushing himself forward. "Did you have a fight in the trench?"

The other lieutenant shook his head proudly. "I should rather say not. The gentlemen never got as far as that. These three tried to cut the wire entanglements night before last, but our machine gun man caught 'em at it and his iron spatter spoiled their little game. Well, there they lay, of course, right under our very noses and they had on the loveliest shoes of bright yellow. My men begrudged 'em those shoes. There—" he ended, pointing with his finger at the feet of the pale sergeant—"there you see one pair. But we'll have to start now. March, sergeant! My respects, Captain. The Italians'll open their eyes when they come over tonight to finish us off comfortably and a hundred and fifty rifles go off and two brand-new bullet squirters. Ha-ha! Sorry I can't be here to see it! Good-by, little man! Good luck!" Humming a merry popular song he followed his men—without looking back, without even observing that Marschner accompanied him a little on his way.

Gaily, as though on a Sunday picnic, the men started on the way, which led over the terrible field of shards and ruins and the steep, shot-up hill. What hells they must have endured there, in that mole's gallery! The captain remained standing and heaved a deep sigh. It was as if that long, grey column slowly winding its way through the trench were carrying away the last hope. The back of the last soldier, growing smaller and smaller, was the world. The captain's eyes clung greedily to that back and measured fearfully the distance to the corner of the trench from which he must lose sight of it forever. There was still time to call out a greeting, and by running very fast one might still catch up and hand over a letter.

Then the last medium disappeared—the last possibility of dividing the world into two halves. And his yearning recoiled before the endless space it had to bridge—and there was nothing else to bridge it but his yearning.

Marschner sank into himself as he stood deserted in the empty trench. He felt as though he had been hollowed out, and looked about for help, and his eyes clung to the depression from which the corpses had now been lifted. Only the three Italians were lying there, the life already gone from them. The one showed his face, his mouth was still wide open as for a cry, and his hands dug themselves, as though to ward off pain, into his unnaturally swollen body. The other two lay with their knees drawn up and their heads between their arms. The naked feet with their grey convulsed toes stared into the communication trench like things robbed, with a mute accusal. There was a remoteness about these dead bodies, a loneliness, an isolation about their bared feet. A tangled web of memories arose, a throng of fleeting faces glimmering in the captain's soul—gondoliers of Venice, voluble cabbies, a toothless innkeeper's wife at Posilipo. Two trips on a vacation in Italy drove an army of sorrowing figures through his mind. And finally another figure appeared in that ghostly dance of death, his own sister, sitting in a concert hall in Vienna, care-free, listening to music, while her brother lay somewhere stretched out on the ground, rigid in death, an enemy's corpse just to be kicked aside.

Shuddering, the captain hastened back down the trench, as though the three dead men were pursuing him noiselessly on their naked soles. When he reached his own men at last, he felt as if he had arrived at a harbor of safety.

The shells were now falling so thick that there was not a moment's pause between the explosions, and all sounds merged into a single, equal, rolling thunder, which made the earth tremble like the hull of a ship. But there was a particularly sharp crashing and splintering from one shot that hit the trench squarely and whirled the coverings above in all direc-

tions. A few minutes later two groaning men dragged down a corpse, leaned it against the trench wall, and climbed back to their posts through the narrow shaft. Marschner saw his sergeant get up and move his lips—then a soldier in the corner arose and took up his rifle and followed the two others heavily. It was all so comfortless, so unmercifully businesslike, precisely as when "Next!" breaks into the monotony of the practising in the yard of the barracks, only with the difference that a little group at once gathered about the dead man, drawn by that shy curiosity which irresistibly attracts simple folk to corpses and funerals. Most of the men expected the same of him—he saw it in their eyes—that he, too, would go over and pay a last tribute of respect to the dead. But he did not want to. He was absolutely determined not to learn the fallen man's name. He was bent upon practising self-mastery at last and remaining indifferent to all small happenings. So long as he had not seen the dead man's face nor heard his name, only a man had fallen in battle, one of the many thousands. If he kept his distance and did not bend over each individual and did not let a definite fate come to his notice, it was not so hard to remain indifferent.

Stubbornly he walked over to the second shaft leading to the top and for the first time observed that it had grown quite silent up above. There was no longer any screaming or bursting. This silence came upon the deafening din like a paralyzing weight and filled space with a tense expectancy that flickered in all eyes. He wanted to rid himself of this oppression and crept through the crumbling shaft up to the top.

The first thing he saw was Weixler's curved back. He was holding his field-glass glued to his eyes under cover of a shooting shield. The others were also standing as if pasted to their posts, and there was something alarming in the motionlessness of their shoulder blades. All at once a twitching ran through the petrified row. Weixler sprang back, jostled against the captain, and cried out: "They are coming!" Then he stormed to the shaft and blew the alarm whistle.

Marschner stared after him helplessly. He walked with hesitating steps to the shield and looked out upon the wide, smoke-covered field, which curved beyond the tangle of wires, grey, torn, blood-flecked, like the bloated form of a gigantic corpse. Far in the background the sun was sinking. Its great copper disc already cut in half by the horizon seemed to be growing out of the ground. And against that dazzling background black silhouettes were dancing like midges under a microscope, like Indians swinging their tomahawks. They were still mere specks. Sometimes they disappeared entirely and then leaped high, and came nearer, their rifles wriggling in the air like the feet of a polyp. Gradually their cries became audible and swelled louder and louder like the far barking of dogs. When they called "Avanti!" it was a piercing cry, and when the call "Coraggio!" went through their lines, it changed to a dull, thunderous roll.

The entire company now stood close-packed up against the slope of the trench, their faces as of stone, restrained, pale as chalk, with lipless mouths, each man's gun in position—a single beast of prey with a hundred eyes and arms.

"Don't shoot! Don't shoot! Don't shoot!" Lieutenant Weixler's voice yelled without pause through the trench. His command seemed to lay its grasp on every throat and to hold the fingers moveless that greedily clasped the triggers. The first hand grenade flew into the trench. The captain saw it coming, then saw a man loosen from the mass, reel toward the dugout with outstretched arms, bending over, a veil of blood covering his face. Then—at last!—it was a relief—came the beating of the machine guns, and at once the rifles went off, too, like the raging of an angry pack. A cold, repulsive greed lay on all faces. Some of the men cried out aloud in their hate and rage when new groups emerged out there behind the thinning rows. The barrels of the rifles glowed with heat—and still the rumbling cries of "Coraggio!" came nearer and nearer.

As though in a frenzy of insanity, the silhouettes hopped about out there, sprang into the air, fell, and rolled over each

other, as though the war dance had only just reached the climax of its paroxysm.

Then Captain Marschner observed the man next to him let his rifle sink for a moment and with hasty, shaking hands insert the bayonet into the smoking barrel. The captain felt as though he were going to vomit. He closed his eyes in dizziness and leaned against the trench wall, and let himself glide to the earth. Was he to—to see—that? Was he to see men being murdered right alongside of him? He tore his revolver from his pocket, emptied it, and threw it away. Now he was defenseless. And suddenly he grew calm and rose to his feet, elevated by a wonderful composure, ready to let himself be butchered by one of those panting beasts who were storming on, chased by the blind fear of death. He wanted to die like a man, without hatred, without rage, with clean hands.

A hoarse roar, a frightful, dehumanized cry almost beside him wrenched his thoughts back into the trench. A broad stream of light and fire, travelling in a steep curve, flowed blindingly down beside him and sprayed over the shoulder of the tall pock-marked tailor of the first line. In the twinkling of an eye the man's entire left side flared up in flames. With a howl of agony he threw himself to the ground, writhed and screamed and leaped to his feet again, and ran moaning up and down like a living torch, until he broke down, half-charred, and twitched, and then lay rigid. Captain Marschner saw him lying there and smelt the odor of burned flesh, and his eyes involuntarily strayed to his own hand on which a tiny, white spot just under his thumb reminded him of the torments he had suffered in his boyhood from a bad burn.

At that moment a jubilant hurrah roared through the trench, rising from a hundred relieved throats. The attack had been repulsed! Lieutenant Weixler had carefully taken aim at the thrower of the liquid fire and hit at the first shot. The liquid fire had risen up like a fountain from the falling man's stiffening hand and rained down on his own comrades. Their decimated lines shrank back suddenly before the unexpected danger and

they fled pell-mell, followed by the furious shots from all the rifles.

The men fell down as if lifeless, with slack faces and lusterless eyes, as though someone had turned off the current that had fed those dead creatures with strength from some unknown source. Some of them leaned against the trench wall white as cheese, and held their heads over, and vomited from exhaustion. Marschner also felt his gorge rising and groped his way toward the dugout. He wanted to go into his own place now and be alone and somehow relieve himself of the despair that held him in its grip.

"Hello!" Lieutenant Weixler cried unexpectedly through the silence, and bounded over to the left where the machine guns stood.

The captain turned back again, mounted the ladder, and gazed out into the foreground of the field. There, right in front of the wire-entanglements, kneeled an Italian. His left arm was hanging down limp, and his right arm was raised beseechingly, and he was crawling toward them slowly. A little farther back, half hidden by the kneeling man, something kept stirring on the ground. There three wounded men were trying to creep toward their own trench, pressing close to the ground. One could see very clearly how they sought cover behind corpses and now and then lay motionless so as to escape discovery by the foe. It was a pitiful sight—those God-forsaken creatures surrounded by death, each moment like an eternity above them, yet clinging with tooth and nail to their little remnant of life.

"Come on! Isn't there a rope somewhere?" an old corporal called down into the trench. "I'm sorry for the poor devil of an Italian. Let's pull him in!"

The machine guns interrupted him. The kneeling man beside the wires listened, started as if to run, and fell upon his face. The earth behind him rose in dust from the bullets and the others beyond raised themselves like snakes, then all three gave a short leap forward and—lay very still.

For a moment Captain Marschner stood speechless. He opened his lips, but no sound came from his throat. At last his tongue obeyed him and he yelled, with a mad choking fury in his voice:

"Lieutenant Weixler!"

"Yes, sir," came back unconcernedly.

Captain Marschner ran toward the lieutenant with clenched fists and scarlet face.

"Did you fire?" he panted, breathless.

The lieutenant looked at him in astonishment, placed his hands against the seams of his trousers and replied with perfect formality:

"I did, sir."

Marschner's voice failed him again for a moment. His teeth chattered. His whole body trembled as he stammered:

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself? A soldier doesn't fire at helpless, wounded men. Remember that!"

Weixler went white.

"I beg to inform you, Captain, that the one who was near our trench was hiding the others from us. I couldn't spare him." Then, with a sudden explosion of anger, he added defiantly: "Besides, I thought we had quite enough hungry mouths at home as it is."

The captain jumped at him like a snapping dog and stamped his foot and roared:

"I'm not interested in what you think. I forbid you to shoot at the wounded! As long as I am commanding officer here every wounded man shall be held sacred, whether he tries to get to us or to return to the enemy. Do you understand me?"

The lieutenant drew himself up haughtily.

"In that case I must take the liberty, sir, of begging you to hand me that order in writing. I consider it my duty to inflict as much injury upon the enemy as possible. A man that I let off today may be cured and come back two months later and perhaps kill ten of my comrades."

For a moment the two men stood still, staring at each other

as though about to engage in mortal combat. Then Marschner nodded his head almost imperceptibly, and said in a toneless voice:

"You shall have it in writing."

He swung on his heel and left. Colored spheres seemed to dance before his eyes, and he had to summon all his strength to keep his equilibrium. When at last he reached the dugout, he fell on the box of empty tins as if he had been beaten. His hatred changed slowly into a deep, embittered sense of discouragement. He knew perfectly well that he was in the wrong. Not at the bar of his conscience! His conscience told him that the deed the lieutenant had done was cowardly murder. But he and his conscience had nothing to say here. They had happened to stray into this place and would have to stay in the wrong. What was he to do? If he gave the order in writing, he would afford Weixler his desired opportunity of pushing himself forward and invite an investigation of his own conduct. He begrudged the malicious creature that triumph. Perhaps it were better to make an end of the whole business by going to the brigade staff and telling the exalted gentlemen there frankly to their faces that he could no longer be a witness to that bloody firing, that he could not hunt men like wild beasts, no matter what uniform they happened to wear. Then, at least, this playing at hide and seek would end. Let them shoot him, if they wanted to, or hang him like a common felon. He would show them that he knew how to die.

He walked out into the trench firmly, and ordered a soldier to summon Lieutenant Weixler. Now it was so clear within him and so calm. He heard the hellish shooting that the Italians were again directing at the trench and went forward slowly like a man out promenading.

"They're throwing heavy mines at us now, Captain," the old corporal announced, and looked at Marschner in despair. But Marschner went by unmoved. All that no longer mattered to him. The lieutenant would take over the command. That

was what he was going to tell him. He could hardly await the moment to relieve himself of the responsibility.

As Weixler delayed coming, he crept up through the shaft to the top.

The man's small, evil eyes flew to meet him and sought the written order in his hand. The captain acted as though he did not notice the question in his look, and said imperiously:

"Lieutenant, I turn the command of the company over to you until ——"

A short roar of unheard-of violence cut short his speech. He had the feeling, "That will hit me," and that very instant he saw something like a black whale rush down in front of his eyes from out of the heavens and plunge head foremost into the trench wall behind him. Then a crater opened up in the earth, a sea of flame that raised him up and filled his lungs with fire.

On slowly recovering his consciousness he found himself buried under a huge mound of earth, with only his head and his left arm free. He had no feeling in his other limbs. His whole body had grown weightless. He could not find his legs. Nothing was there that he could move. But there was a burning and burrowing that came from somewhere in his brain, scorched his forehead, and made his tongue swell into a heavy, choking lump.

"Water!" he moaned. Was there no one there who could pour a drop of moisture into the burning hollow of his mouth? No one at all? Then where was Weixler? He must be near by. Or else—was it possible that Weixler was wounded too? Marschner wanted to jump up and find out what had happened to Weixler—he wanted to ——

Like an overburdened steam-crane his left hand struggled toward his head, and when he at last succeeded in pushing it under his neck, he felt with a shudder that his skull offered no resistance and his hand slid into a warm, soft mush, and his hair, pasty with coagulated blood, stuck to his fingers like warm, moist felt.

"Dying!" went through him with a chill. To die there—all alone. And Weixler? He had to find out what had happened to —happened to —

With a superhuman effort he propped his head up on his left hand high enough to have a view of a few paces along the trench. Now he saw Weixler, with his back turned, leaning on his right side against the trench wall, standing there crookedly, his left hand pressed against his body, his shoulders hunched as if he had a cramp. The captain raised himself a little higher and saw the ground and a broad, dark shadow that Weixler cast. Blood? He was bleeding? Or what? Surely that was blood. It couldn't be anything but blood. And yet it stretched out so peculiarly and drew itself like a thin, red thread up to Weixler, up to where his hand pressed his body as though he wanted to pull up the roots that bound him to the earth.

The captain *had* to see! He pulled his head farther out from under the mound—and uttered a hoarse cry, a cry of infinite horror. The wretched man was dragging his entrails behind him!

"Weixler!" burst from him in a shudder of compassion.

The man turned slowly, looked down at Marschner questioningly, pale, sad, with frightened eyes. He stood like that only the fraction of a second, then he lost his balance, reeled, and fell down, and was lost from the captain's circle of vision. Their glances scarcely had time to cross, the pallid face had merely flitted by. And yet it stood there, remained fixed in the air, with a mild, soft, plaintive expression about the narrow lips, an unforgettable air of gentle anxious resignation.

"He is suffering!" flashed through Marschner. "He is suffering!"—it exulted him. And a glow suffused his pallor. His fingers, sticky with blood, seemed to caress the air, until his head sank backward, and his eyes broke.

The first soldiers who penetrated the towering mound of earth where he lay found him dead. But in spite of his ghastly wound, a contented, almost happy smile hovered about his lips.

FIELD AND TRENCH

FROM

"GOOD-BYE TO ALL THAT" BY ROBERT GRAVES

Now as the summer advanced there came new types of bombs and trench-mortars, heavier shelling, improved gas-masks and a general tightening up of discipline. We saw the first battalions of the new army and felt like scarecrows by comparison. We went in and out of the Cambrin and Cuinchy trenches, with billets in Béthune and the neighboring villages. By this time I had caught the pessimism of the division. Its spirit in the trenches was largely defensive; the policy was not to stir the Germans into more than their usual hostility. But casualties were still very heavy for trench warfare. Pessimism made everyone superstitious. I became superstitious too: I found myself believing in signs of the most trivial nature. Sergeant Smith, my second sergeant, told me of my predecessor in command of the platoon. "He was a nice gentleman, sir, but very wild. Just before the Rue du Bois show he says to me: 'By the way, sergeant, I'm going to get killed tomorrow. I know that. And I know that you're going to be all right. So see that my kit goes back to my people. You'll find their address in my pocketbook. You'll find five hundred francs there too. Now remember this, Sergeant Smith, you keep a hundred francs yourself and divide up the rest among the chaps left.' He says: 'Send my pocket-book back with my other stuff, Sergeant Smith, but for God's sake burn my diary. They mustn't see that. I'm going to get it *here!*' He points to his forehead. And that's how it was. He got it through the forehead all right. I sent the stuff back to his parents. I divided up the money and I burnt the diary."

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One day I was walking along a trench at Cambrin when I suddenly dropped flat on my face; two seconds later a whizz-bang struck the back of the trench exactly where I had been. The sergeant who was with me, walking a few steps ahead, rushed back: "Are you killed, sir?" The shell was fired from a battery near Auchy only a thousand yards away, so that it must have arrived before the sound of the gun. How did I know that I should throw myself on my face?

I saw a ghost at Béthune. He was a man called Private Challoner who had been at Lancaster with me and again in F Company at Wrexham. When he went out with a draft to join the First Battalion he shook my hand and said: "I'll meet you again in France, sir." He had been killed at Festubert in May and in June he passed by our C Company billet where we were just having a special dinner to celebrate our safe return from Cuinchy. There was fish, new potatoes, green peas, asparagus, mutton chops, strawberries and cream, and three bottles of Pommard. Challoner looked in at the window, saluted and passed on. There was no mistaking him or the cap-badge he was wearing. There was no Royal Welch battalion billeted within miles of Béthune at the time. I jumped up and looked out of the window, but saw nothing except a fag-end smoking on the pavement. Ghosts were numerous in France at the time.

There was constant mining going on in this Cambrin-Cuinchy sector. We had the prospect of being blown up at any moment. An officer of the R.E. tunnelling company was awarded the Victoria Cross while we were here. A duel of mining and counter-mining was going on. The Germans began to undermine his original boring, so he rapidly tunnelled underneath them. It was touch and go who would get the mine ready first. He won. But when he detonated it from the trench by an electric lead, nothing happened. He ran down again into the mine, retamped the charge, and was just back in time to set it off before the Germans. I had been into the upper boring on the previous day. It was about twenty feet under the German

lines. At the end of the gallery I found a Welsh miner, one of our own men who had transferred to the Royal Engineers, on listening duty. He cautioned me to silence. I could distinctly hear the Germans working somewhere underneath. He whispered: "So long as they work, I don't mind; it's when they stop." He did his two-hour spell by candle-light. It was very stuffy. He was reading a book. The mining officer had told me that they were allowed to read; it didn't interfere with their listening. It was a paper-backed novelette called *From Mill Girl to Duchess*. The men of the tunnelling companies were notorious thieves, by the way. They would snatch things up from the trench and scurry off with them into their borings; just like mice.

After one particularly bad spell of trenches I got bad news in a letter from Charterhouse. Bad news in the trenches might affect a man in either of two ways. It might drive him to suicide (or recklessness amounting to suicide), or it might seem trivial in comparison with present experiences and be disregarded. But unless his leave was due he was helpless. A year later, when I was in trenches in the same sector, an officer of the North Staffordshire Regiment had news from home that his wife was living with another man. He went out on a raid the same night and was either killed or captured; so the men with him said. There had been a fight and they had come back without him. Two days later he was arrested at Béthune trying to board a leave-train to go home; he had intended to shoot up the wife and her lover. He was court-martialled for deserting in the face of the enemy, but the court was content to cashier him. He went as a private soldier to another regiment. I do not know what happened afterwards.

The bad news was about Dick, saying that he was not at all the innocent sort of fellow I took him for. He was as bad as anyone could be. The letter was written by a cousin of mine who was still at Charterhouse. I tried not to believe it. I remembered that he owed me a grudge and decided that this was a very cruel act of spite. Dick's letters had been my greatest

stand-by all these months when I was feeling low; he wrote every week, mostly about poetry. They were something solid and clean to set off against the impermanence of trench life and the uncleanness of sex-life in billets. I was now back in Béthune. Two officers of another company had just been telling me how they had slept, in the same room, one with the mother and one with the daughter. They had tossed for the mother because the daughter was a "yellow-looking little thing like a lizard." And the Red Lamp, the army brothel, was around the corner in the main street. I had seen a queue of a hundred and fifty men waiting outside the door, each to have his short turn with one or the other of the three women in the house. My servant, who had been in the queue, told me that the charge was ten francs a man—about eight shillings at that time. Each woman served nearly a battalion of men every week for as long as she lasted. The assistant provost-marshal had told me that three weeks was the usual limit, "after which the woman retires on her earnings, pale but proud." I was always being teased because I would not sleep even with the nicer girls. And I excused myself, not on moral grounds or on grounds of fastidiousness, but in the only way they could understand: I said that I didn't want a dose. A good deal of talk in billets was about the peculiar bed-manners of the French women. "She was very nice and full of games. I said to her: 'S'il vous plaît, ôtes-toi la chemise, ma chérie.' But she wouldn't. She said, 'Oh no'-non, mon lieutenant. Ce n'est pas convenable.' " I was glad when we were back in trenches. And there I had a more or less reassuring letter from Dick. He told me that I was right, that my cousin had a spite against him and me, that he had been ragging about in a silly way, but that there was not much harm to it; he was very sorry and would stop it for the sake of our friendship.

At the end of July, I and Robertson, one of the other five Royal Welch officers who had been attached to the Welsh, got orders to proceed to the Laventie sector, some miles to the north. We were to report to the Second Battalion of the Royal Welch Fusiliers. Frank Jones-Bateman and Hanmer Jones, two

more of us, went to the First Battalion. The remaining two of the six had already gone back, McLellan sick and Watkin with bomb wounds that have kept him limping ever since. We were sorry to say good-bye to the men; they all crowded round to shake hands and wish us luck. And we felt a little sorry too that we had to start all over again getting to know a new company and new regimental customs. But it would be worth it, to be with our own regiment. Robertson and I agreed to take our journey as leisurely as possible. Laventie was only seventeen miles away, but our orders were to go there by train; so a mess-cart took us down to Béthune. We asked the railway transport officer what trains he had to Laventie. He told us one was going in a few minutes; we decided to miss it. There was no train after that until the next day, so we stopped the night at the Hôtel de la France. (The Prince of Wales, who was a lieutenant in the Fortieth Siege Battery, was billeted there sometimes. He was a familiar figure in Béthune. I only spoke to him once; it was in the public bath, where he and I were the only bathers one morning. He was graciously pleased to remark how emphatically cold the water was and I loyally assented that he was emphatically right. We were very pink and white and did exercises on the horizontal bar afterwards. I joked to Frank about it: "I have just met our future King in a bath." Frank said: "I can trump that. Two days ago I had a friendly talk with him in the A.S.C. latrines." The Prince's favorite rendezvous was the *Globe*, a café in the Béthune market square reserved for British officers and French civilians; principally spies by the look of them. I once heard him complaining indignantly that General French had refused to let him go up into the line.)

The next day we caught our train. It took us to a junction, the name of which I forget. Here we spent a day walking about in the fields. There was no train until next day, when one took us on to Berguette, a railhead still a number of miles from Laventie, where a mess-cart was waiting for us in answer to a telegram we had sent. We finally rattled up to battalion head-

quarters in Laventie High Street. We had taken fifty-two hours to come seventeen miles. We saluted the adjutant smartly, gave our names, and said that we were Third Battalion officers posted to the regiment. He did not shake hands with us, offer us a drink, or give us a word of welcome. He said coldly: "I see. Well, which of you is senior? Oh, never mind. Give your particulars to the regimental sergeant-major. Tell him to post whoever is senior to A Company and the other to B Company." The sergeant-major took our particulars. He introduced me to a young second-lieutenant of A Company, to which I was to go. He was a special reservist of the East Surrey Regiment and was known as the Surrey-man. He took me along to the company billet. As soon as we were out of earshot of battalion headquarters I asked him: "What's wrong with the adjutant? Why didn't he shake hands or give me any sort of decent welcome?"

The Surrey-man said: "Well, it's your regiment, not mine. They're all like that. You must realize that this is a regular battalion, one of the only four infantry battalions in France that is still more or less its old self. This is the Nineteenth Brigade, the luckiest in France. It has not been permanently part of any division, but used as army reserve to put in wherever a division has been badly knocked. So, except for the retreat, where it lost about a company, and Fromelles, where it lost half of what was left, it has been practically undamaged. A lot of the wounded have rejoined since. All our company commanders are regulars, and so are all our N.C.O.'s. The peace-time custom of taking no notice of newly-joined officers is still more or less kept up for the first six months. It's bad enough for the Sandhurst chaps, it's worse for special reservists like you and Rugg and Robertson, it's worse still for outsiders like me from another regiment." We were going down the village street. The men sitting about on the door-steps jumped up smartly to attention as we passed and saluted with a fixed stony glare. They were magnificent looking men. Their uniforms were spotless, their equipment khaki-blancoed and their buttons and cap-badges twinkling. We reached company

headquarters, where I reported to my company commander, Captain G. O. Thomas. He was a regular of seventeen years' service, a well-known polo-player, and a fine soldier. This is the order that he would himself have preferred. He shook hands without a word, waved me to a chair, offered a cigarette and continued writing his letter. I found later that A was the best company I could have struck.

The Surrey-man asked me to help him censor some company letters before going over to the battalion mess for lunch; they were more literate than the ones in the Welsh regiment, but duller. On the way to the mess he told me more about the battalion. He asked me whether it was my first time out. "I was attached to the Second Welsh Regiment for three months; I commanded a company there for a bit." "Oh, were you? Well, I'd advise you to say nothing at all about it, then they'll not expect too much of you. They treat us like dirt; in a way it will be worse for you than for me because you're a full lieutenant. They'll resent that with your short service. There's one lieutenant here of six years' service and second-lieutenants who have been out here since the autumn. They have already had two Special Reserve captains foisted on them; they're planning to get rid of them somehow. In the mess, if you open your mouth or make the slightest noise the senior officers jump down your throat. Only officers of the rank of captain are allowed to drink whisky or turn on the gramophone. We've got to jolly well keep still and look like furniture. It's just like peace time. Mess bills are very high; the mess was in debt at Quetta last year and we are economizing now to pay that back. We get practically nothing for our money but ordinary rations and the whiskey we aren't allowed to drink.

"We've even got a polo-ground here. There was a polo-match between the First and Second Battalions the other day. The First Battalion had had all their decent ponies pinched that time when they were sent up at Ypres and the cooks and transport men had to come up into the line to prevent a break through. So this battalion won easily. Can you ride? No? Well,

subalterns who can't ride have to attend riding-school every afternoon while we're in billets. They give us hell, too. Two of us have been at it for four months and haven't passed off yet. They keep us trotting round the field, with crossed stirrups most of the time, and they give us pack-saddles instead of riding-saddles. Yesterday they called us up suddenly without giving us time to change into breeches. That reminds me, you notice everybody's wearing shorts? It's a regimental order. The battalion thinks it's still in India. They treat the French civilians just like 'niggers,' kick them about, talk army Hindustani at them. It makes me laugh sometimes. Well, what with a greasy pack-saddle, bare knees, crossed stirrups, and a wild new transport pony that the transport men had pinched from the French, I had a pretty thin time. The colonel, the adjutant, the senior major and the transport officer stood at the four corners of the ring and slogged at the ponies as they came round. I came off twice and got wild with anger, and nearly decided to ride the senior major down. The funny thing is that they don't realize that they are treating us badly—it's such an honor to be serving with the regiment. So the best thing is to pretend you don't care what they do or say."

I protested: "But all this is childish. Is there a war on here or isn't there?"

"The battalion doesn't recognize it socially," he answered. "Still, in trenches I'd rather be with this battalion than in any other that I have met. The senior officers do know their job, whatever else one says about them, and the N.C.O.'s are absolutely trustworthy."

The Second Battalion was peculiar in having a battalion mess instead of company messes. The Surrey-man said grimly: "It's supposed to be more sociable." This was another peacetime survival. We went together into the big château near the church. About fifteen officers of various ranks were sitting in chairs reading the week's illustrated papers or (the seniors at least) talking quietly. At the door I said: "Good morning, gentlemen," the new officer's customary greeting to the mess.

There was no answer. Everybody looked at me curiously. The silence that my entry had caused was soon broken by the gramophone, which began singing happily:

We've been married just one year,
And Oh, we've got the sweetest,
And Oh, we've got the neatest,
And Oh, we've got the cutest
Little oil stove.

I found a chair in the background and picked up *The Field*. The door burst open suddenly and a senior officer with a red face and angry eye burst in. "Who the blazes put that record on?" he shouted to the room. "One of the bloody warts I expect. Take it off somebody. It makes me sick. Let's have some real music. Put on the *Angelus*." Two subalterns (in the Royal Welch a subaltern had to answer to the name of "wart") sprang up, stopped the gramophone, and put on *When the Angelus is ringing*. The young captain who had put on *We've been married* shrugged his shoulders and went on reading, the other faces in the room were blank.

"Who was that?" I whispered to the Surrey-man.

He frowned. "That's Buzz Off," he said.

Before the record was finished the door opened and in came the colonel; Buzz Off reappeared with him. Everybody jumped up and said in unison: "Good morning, sir." It was his first appearance that day. Before giving the customary greeting and asking us to sit down he turned spitefully to the gramophone: "Who on earth puts this wretched *Angelus* on every time I come into the mess? For heaven's sake play something cheery for a change." And with his own hands he took off the *Angelus*, wound up the gramophone and put on *We've been married just one year*. At that moment a gong rang for lunch and he abandoned it. We filed into the next room, a ball-room with mirrors and a decorated ceiling. We sat down at a long, polished table. The seniors sat at the top, the juniors competed for seats as far away from them as possible. I was unlucky

enough to get a seat at the foot of the table facing the commanding officer, the adjutant and Buzz Off. There was not a word spoken down that end except for an occasional whisper for the salt or for the beer—very thin French stuff. Robertson, who had not been warned, asked the mess waiter for whisky. "Sorry, sir," said the mess waiter, "it's against orders for the young officers." Robertson was a man of forty-two, a solicitor with a large practice, and had stood for Parliament in the Yarmouth division at the previous election.

I saw Buzz Off glaring at us and busied myself with my meat and potatoes.

He nudged the adjutant. "Who are those two funny ones down there, Charley," he asked.

"New this morning from the militia. Answer to the names of Robertson and Graves."

"Which is which?" asked the colonel.

"I'm Robertson, sir."

"I wasn't asking you."

Robertson winced, but said nothing. Then Buzz Off noticed something.

"T'other wart's wearing a wind-up tunic." Then he bent forward and asked me loudly. "You there, wart. Why the hell are you wearing your stars on your shoulder instead of your sleeve?"

My mouth was full and I was embarrassed. Everybody was looking at me. I swallowed the lump of meat whole and said: "It was a regimental order in the Welsh Regiment. I understood that it was the same everywhere in France."

The colonel turned puzzled to the adjutant: "What on earth's the man talking about the Welsh Regiment for?" And then to me: "As soon as you have finished your lunch you will visit the master-tailor. Report at the orderly room when you're properly dressed."

There was a severe struggle in me between resentment and regimental loyalty. Resentment for the moment had the better of it. I said under my breath: "You damned snobs. I'll

survive you all. There'll come a time when there won't be one of you left serving in the battalion to remember battalion mess at Laventie." This time came, exactly a year later.¹

We went up to the trenches that night. They were high-command trenches; because water was struck when one dug down three feet, the parapet and parados were built up man-high. I found my platoon curt and reserved. Even when on sentry-duty at night they would never talk confidentially about themselves and their families like my platoon in the Welsh Regiment. Townsend, the platoon-sergeant, was an ex-police-man who had been on the reserve when war broke out. He used to drive his men rather than lead them. A Company was at Red Lamp Corner; the front trench broke off short here and started again further back on the right. A red lamp was hung at the corner, invisible to the enemy, but a warning after dark to the company on our right not to fire to the left of it. Work and duties were done with a silent soldier-like efficiency quite foreign to the Welsh.

The first night I was in trenches my company commander asked me to go out on patrol; it was the regimental custom to test new officers in this way. All the time that I had been with the Welsh I had never once been out in No Man's Land, even to inspect the barbed wire. In the Welsh Regiment the condition of the wire was, I believe, the responsibility of the battalion intelligence officer. I never remember any work done on it by C Company. I think we left it to the Royal Engineers. When Hewitt, the machine-gun officer, used to go out on patrol sometimes it was regarded as a mad escapade. But with both battalions of the Royal Welch Fusiliers it was a point of honour to be masters of No Man's Land from dusk to dawn. There was not a night at Laventie that a message did not come down the line from sentry to sentry: "Pass the word; officer's patrol going out." My orders for this patrol were to see whether a German sap-head was occupied by night or not.

I went out from Red Lamp Corner with Sergeant Townsend

¹ The quartermaster excepted.

at about ten o'clock. We both had revolvers. We pulled socks, with the toes cut off, over our bare knees, to prevent them showing up in the dark and to make crawling easier. We went ten yards at a time, slowly, not on all fours, but wriggling flat along the ground. After each movement we lay and watched for about ten minutes. We crawled through our own wire entanglements and along a dry ditch; ripping our clothes on more barbed wire, glaring into the darkness till it began turning round and round (once I snatched my fingers in horror from where I had planted them on the slimy body of an old corpse), nudging each other with rapidly beating hearts at the slightest noise or suspicion, crawling, watching, crawling, shamming dead under the blinding light of enemy flares and again crawling, watching, crawling. (A Second Battalion officer who revisited these Laventie trenches after the war was over told me of the ridiculously small area of No Man's Land compared with the size it seemed on the long, painful journeys that he made over it. "It was like the real size of the hollow in a tooth compared with the size it feels to the tongue.")

We found a gap in the German wire and came at last to within five yards of the sap-head that was our objective. We waited quite twenty minutes listening for any signs of its occupation. Then I nudged Sergeant Townsend and, revolvers in hand, we wriggled quickly forward and slid into it. It was about three feet deep and unoccupied. On the floor were a few empty cartridges and a wicker basket containing something large and smooth and round, twice as large as a football. Very, very carefully I groped and felt all around it in the dark. I couldn't guess what it was. I was afraid that it was some sort of infernal machine. Eventually I dared to lift it out and carry it back. I had a suspicion that it might be one of the German gas-cylinders that we had heard so much about. We got back after making the journey of perhaps two hundred yards in rather more than two hours. The sentries passed along the word that we were in again. Our prize turned out to be a large

glass container quarter-filled with some pale yellow liquid. This was sent down to battalion headquarters and from there sent along to the divisional intelligence office. Everybody was very interested in it. The theory was that the vessel contained a chemical for re-damping gas masks. I now believe it was the dregs of country wine mixed with rainwater. I never heard the official report. The colonel, however, told my company commander in the hearing of the Surrey-man: "Your new wart seems to have more guts than the others." After this I went out fairly often. I found that the only thing that the regiment respected in young officers was personal courage.

Besides, I had worked it out like this. The best way of lasting the war out was to get wounded. The best time to get wounded was at night and in the open, because a wound in a vital spot was less likely. Fire was more or less unaimed at night and the whole body was exposed. It was also convenient to be wounded when there was no rush on the dressing-station services, and when the back areas were not being heavily shelled. It was most convenient to be wounded, therefore, on a night patrol in a quiet sector. You could usually manage to crawl into a shell-hole until somebody came to the rescue. Still, patrolling had its peculiar risks. If you were wounded and a German patrol got you, they were as likely as not to cut your throat. The bowie-knife was a favorite German patrol weapon; it was silent. (At this time the British inclined more to the "cosh," a loaded stick.) The most important information that a patrol could bring back was to what regiment and division the troops opposite belonged. So if a wounded man was found and it was impossible to get him back without danger to oneself, the thing to be done was to strip him of his badges. To do that quickly and silently it might be necessary first to cut his throat or beat in his skull.

Sir P. Mostyn, a lieutenant who was often out patrolling at Laventie, had a feud on with a German patrol on the left of the battalion frontage. (Our patrols usually consisted of an officer and one or, at the most, two men. German patrols were

usually six or seven men under an N.C.O. German officers left as much as they decently could to their N.C.O.'s. They did not, as one of our sergeant-majors put it, believe in "keeping a dog and barking themselves.") One night Mostyn caught sight of his opponents; he had raised himself on one knee to throw a percussion bomb at them when they fired and wounded him in the arm, which immediately went numb. He caught the bomb before it hit the ground and threw it with his left hand, and in the confusion that followed managed to return to the trench.

Like everyone else I had a carefully worked out formula for taking risks. We would all take any risk, even the certainty of death, to save life or to maintain an important position. To take life we would run, say, a one-in-five risk, particularly if there was some wider object than merely reducing the enemy's man-power; for instance, picking off a well-known sniper, or getting fire ascendancy in trenches where the lines were dangerously close. I only once refrained from shooting a German I saw, and that was at Cuinchy about three weeks after this. When sniping from a knoll in the support line where we had a concealed loop hole I saw a German, about seven hundred yards away, through my telescopic sights. He was having a bath in the German third line. I somehow did not like the idea of shooting a naked man, so I handed the rifle to the sergeant who was with me and said: "Here, take this. You're a better shot than me." He got him, he said; but I had not stayed to watch.

About saving the lives of enemy wounded there was disagreement; the convention varied with the division. Some divisions, like the Canadians and a division of Lowland territorials, who had, they claimed, atrocities to avenge, would not only take no risks to rescue enemy wounded, but would go out of their way to finish them off. The Royal Welch Fusiliers were gentlemanly: perhaps a one-in-twenty risk to get a wounded German to safety would be considered justifiable. An important factor in taking risks was our own physical condition. When exhausted and wanting to get quickly from one point in

the trenches to another without collapse, and if the enemy were not nearer than four or five hundred yards, we would sometimes take a short cut over the top. In a hurry we would take a one-in-two-hundred risk, when dead tired a one-in-fifty risk. In some battalions where the *morale* was not high, one-in-fifty risks were often taken in mere laziness or despair. The Munsters in the First Division were said by the Welsh to "waste men wicked" by not keeping properly under cover when in the reserve lines. In the Royal Welch there was no wastage of this sort. At no time in the war did any of us allow ourselves to believe that hostilities could possibly continue more than nine months or a year more, so it seemed almost worth while taking care; there even seemed a chance of lasting until the end absolutely unhurt.

The Second Royal Welch, unlike the Second Welsh, believed themselves better trench fighters than the Germans. With the Second Welsh it was not cowardice but modesty. With the Second Royal Welch it was not vainglory but courage: as soon as they arrived in a new sector they insisted on getting fire ascendancy. Having found out from the troops they relieved all possible information as to enemy snipers, machine-guns, and patrols, they set themselves to deal with them one by one. They began with machine-guns firing at night. As soon as one started traversing down a trench the whole platoon farthest removed from its fire would open five rounds rapid at it. The machine-gun would usually stop suddenly but start again after a minute or two. Again five rounds rapid. Then it usually gave up.

The Welsh seldom answered a machine-gun. If they did, it was not with local organized fire, beginning and ending in unison, but in ragged confused protest all along the line. There was almost no firing at night in the Royal Welch, except organized fire at a machine-gun or a persistent enemy sentry, or fire at a patrol close enough to be distinguished as a German one. With all other battalions I met in France there was random popping off all the time; the sentries wanted to show their

spite against the war. Flares were rarely used in the Royal Welch; most often as signals to our patrols that it was time to come back.

As soon as enemy machine-guns had been discouraged, our patrols would go out with bombs to claim possession of No Man's Land. At dawn next morning came the struggle for sniping ascendancy. The Germans, we were told, had special regimental snipers, trained in camouflaging themselves. I saw one killed once at Cuinchy who had been firing all day from a shell-hole between the lines. He had a sort of cape over his shoulders of imitation grass, his face was painted green and brown, and his rifle was also green fringed. A number of empty cartridges were found by him, and his cap with the special oak-leaf badge. Few battalions attempted to get control of the sniping situation. The Germans had the advantage of having many times more telescopic sights than we did, and steel loopholes that our bullets could not pierce. Also a system by which the snipers were kept for months in the same sector until they knew all the loopholes and shallow places in our trenches, and the tracks that our ration-parties used above-ground by night, and where our traverses came in the trench, and so on, better than we did ourselves. British snipers changed their trenches, with their battalions, every week or two, and never had time to learn the German line thoroughly. But at least we counted on getting rid of the unprofessional German sniper. Later we had an elephant-gun in the battalion that would pierce the German loopholes, and if we could not locate the loophole of a persistent sniper we did what we could to dislodge him by a volley of rifle-grenades, or even by ringing up the artillery.

It puzzled us that if a sniper were spotted and killed, another sniper would begin again next day from the same position. The Germans probably underrated us and regarded it as an accident. The willingness of other battalions to let the Germans have sniping ascendancy helped us; enemy snipers often exposed themselves unnecessarily, even the professionals.

There was, of course, one advantage of which no advance or retreat of the enemy could rob us, and that was that we were always facing more or less east; dawn broke behind the German lines, and they seldom realized that for several minutes every morning we could see them though still invisible ourselves. German night wiring-parties often stayed out too long, and we could get a man or two as they went back; sunsets were against us, but sunset was a less critical time. Sentries at night were made to stand with their head and shoulders above the trenches and their rifles in position on the parapet. This surprised me at first. But it meant greater vigilance and self-confidence in the sentry, and it put the top of his head above the level of the parapet. Enemy machine-guns were trained on this level, and it was safer to be hit in the chest or shoulders than in the top of the head. The risk of unaimed fire at night was negligible, so this was really the safest plan. It often happened in battalions like the Second Welsh, where the head-and-shoulder rule was not in force and the sentry just took a peep now and then, that an enemy patrol would sneak up unseen to the British wire, throw a few bombs and get safely back. In the Royal Welch the barbed-wire entanglement was the responsibility of the company behind it. One of our first acts on taking over trenches was to inspect and repair it. We did a lot of work on the wire.

Thomas was an extremely silent man; it was not sullenness but shyness. "Yes" and "no" was the limit of his usual conversation; it was difficult for us subalterns. He never took us into his confidence about company affairs, and we did not like asking him too much. His chief interests seemed to be polo and the regiment. He was most conscientious in taking his watch at night, a thing that the other company commanders did not always do. We enjoyed his food-hampers sent every week from Fortnum and Mason; we messed by companies when in the trenches. Our only complaint was that Buzz Off, who had a good nose for a hamper, used to spend more time than he would otherwise have done in the company mess. This

embarrassed us. Thomas went on leave to England about this time. I heard about it accidentally. He walked about the West End astonished at the amateur militariness that he met everywhere. To be more in keeping with it he gave elaborate awkward salutes to newly-joined second-lieutenants and raised his cap to dug-out colonels and generals. It was a private joke at the expense of the war.

I used to look forward to our spells in trenches at Laventie. Billet life meant battalion mess, also riding-school, which I found rather worse than the Surrey-man had described it. Parades were carried out with peace-time punctiliousness and smartness, especially the daily battalion guard-changing which every now and then, when I was orderly officer, it was my duty to supervise. On one occasion, after the guard-changing ceremony and inspection were over and I was about to dismiss the old guard, I saw Buzz Off cross the village street from one company headquarters to another. As he crossed I called the guard to attention and saluted. I waited for a few seconds and then dismissed the guard, but he had not really gone into the billet; he had been waiting in the doorway. As soon as I dismissed the guard he dashed out with a great show of anger. "As you were, as you were, stand fast!" he shouted to the guard. And then to me: "Why in hell's name, Mr. Graves, didn't you ask my permission to dismiss the parade? You've read the King's Regulations, haven't you? And where the devil are your manners, anyhow?" I apologized. I said that I thought he had gone into the house. This made matters worse. He bellowed at me for arguing; then he asked me where I had learned to salute. "At the depot, sir," I answered. "Then, by heaven, Mr. Graves, you'll have to learn to salute as the battalion does. You will parade every morning before breakfast for a month under Staff-sergeant Evans and do an hour's saluting drill." Then he turned to the guard and dismissed them himself. This was not a particular act of spite against me but the general game of "chasing the warts," at which all the

senior officers played. It was honestly intended to make us better soldiers.

I had been with the Royal Welch about three weeks when the Nineteenth Brigade was moved down to the Béthune sector to fill a gap in the Second Division; the gap was made by taking out the brigade of Guards to go into the Guards Division which was then being formed. On the way down we marched past Lord Kitchener. Kitchener, we were told, commented to the brigadier on the soldier-like appearance of the leading battalion—which was ourselves—but said cynically: "Wait until they've been a week or two in the trenches; they will lose some of that high polish." He apparently mistook us for one of the new-army battalions.

The first trenches we went into on our arrival were the Cuinchy brick-stacks. The company I was with was on the canal-bank frontage, a few hundred yards to the left of where I had been with the Welsh Regiment at the end of May. The Germans opposite wished to be sociable. They sent messages over to us in undetonated rifle-grenades. One of these messages was evidently addressed to the Irish battalion we had relieved:

We all German korporals wish you English korporals a good day and invite you to a good German dinner tonight with beer (ale) and cakes. You little dog ran over to us and we keep it safe; it became no food with you so it run to us. Answer in the same way, if you please.

Another message was a copy of the *Neueste Nachrichten*, a German army newspaper printed at Lille. It gave sensational details of Russian defeats around Warsaw and immense captures of prisoners and guns. But we were more interested in a full account in another column of the destruction of a German submarine by British armed trawlers; no details of the sinking of German submarines had been allowed to appear in any English papers. The battalion cared no more about the successes or reverses of our Allies than it did about the origins of the war. It never allowed itself to have any political feelings

about the Germans. A professional soldier's job was to fight whomsoever the King ordered him to fight; it was as simple as that. With the King as colonel-in-chief of the regiment it was even simpler. The Christmas 1914 fraternization, in which the battalion was among the first to participate, was of the same professional simplicity; it was not an emotional hiatus but a commonplace of military tradition—an exchange of courtesies between officers of opposite armies.

Cuinchy was one of the worst places for rats. They came up from the canal and fed on the many corpses and multiplied. When I was here with the Welsh a new officer came to the company, and, as a token of his welcome, he was given a dug-out containing a spring-bed. When he turned in that night he heard a scuffling, shone his torch on the bed, and there were two rats on his blankets tussling for the possession of a severed hand. This was thought a great joke.

The colonel called for a patrol to go out along the side of the tow-path, where we had heard suspicious sounds on the previous night, to see whether a working-party was out. I volunteered to go when it was dark. But there was a moon that night so bright and full that it dazzled the eyes to look at it. Between us and the Germans was a flat stretch of about two hundred yards, broken only by shell-craters and an occasional patch of coarse grass. I was not with my own company, but lent to B, which had two officers away on leave. Child-Freeman, the company commander, said: "You're not going out on patrol tonight, are you? It's almost as bright as day." I said: "All the more reason for going; they won't be expecting me. Will you please have everything as usual? Let the men fire an occasional rifle and send up a flare every half hour. If I go carefully they'll not see me." But I was nervous, and while we were having supper I clumsily knocked over a cup of tea, and after that a plate. Freeman said: "Look here, I'll 'phone through to battalion and tell them it's too bright for you to go out." But I knew Buzz Off would accuse me of cold feet, so Sergeant Williams and I put on our crawlers and went

GERMANY GOES TO WAR

FROM

"CLASS OF 1902" BY ERNST GLAESER

(Translated by Willa and Edwin Muir)

We left by train that very night. My uncle the confectioner booked a compartment for us and accompanied us to Solothurn. On the way he told us that everything had come very unexpectedly; nobody knew who was really to blame. Probably whoever lost the war; that was always the way. My mother was silent. I thought of Gaston and closed my eyes.

At Solothurn my uncle took his leave. He had to go back into the mountains, along with the rest of the officers, to see that the frontiers were secured. He was in great spirits at the prospect. He was an enthusiastic mountaineer and an ardent nature-lover.

As we got into the train the porter, who had received a substantial tip from my mother, declared that Germany would certainly win. On the platform were standing a group of Austrians who had worked as waiters in West Switzerland, and now, burning with ardour, were returning to their Fatherland to take revenge on the Serbs. They sang, "God maintain our Franz the Emperor," and had taken off their jackets. At last it had come, they shouted. They did not mean the train, which had just come in, but the war.

An elderly gentleman was sitting in our compartment. He began to talk to us at once, as if we were intimate acquaintances. On the back of his hotel bill he had added up the numerical strength of the European armies and balanced them against each other. He compared the two totals and assured my mother that the spiritual qualities of the German troops com-

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pensated for the numerical superiority of the Russians. For in this war spiritual qualities alone would decide the day, and Germany's spiritual qualities were the best in Europe. As a university professor he knew that our youth were ready for the fray, and full of ideals. At last the hour had come when our people could enter on its great world mission. He himself had been almost cast into despair by the crass materialism of the last few years—particularly in the lower classes; but at last life had regained an ideal significance. The great virtues of humanity, which had found their last refuge in Germany—fidelity, patriotism, readiness to die for an idea—these were triumphing now over the trading and shopkeeping spirit. This was the providential lightning flash that would clear the air; after it a new German people would arise whose victory would save the world from mediocrity, brutalizing materialism, western democracy and false humanitarianism. He could see a new world, ruled and directed by a race of aristocrats, who would root out all signs of degeneracy and lead humanity back again to the deserted peaks of the eternal ideals. Those who were too weak must perish by the wayside. The war would cleanse mankind from all its impurities. The future belonged to Siegfried; in this war Hagen would be slain.

The professor talked very gently; the light was reflected from his glasses. My mother, sitting opposite him, listened attentively. With her lips she silently repeated many of his phrases after him. For the first time she began to take some interest in the war. Perhaps because the man was a professor, perhaps because all that he said sounded so clever, perhaps because it had nothing to do with politics—at any rate when, as we neared Basle, the professor foretold that the war would give a mighty impetus to art, she capitulated to his logic. She believed in the war as she would have believed in a new poet. As we got out at the Basle station she said to me that a great time was before us.

The professor walked beside us. His face was grey and covered with an irregular stubble of hair. His shoulders looked feeble and were drawn up. Every now and then he sucked at

his teeth with his tongue, as if he were dislodging decayed scraps of food that stuck between them. He limped. I did not understand his enthusiasm for Siegfried.

When he made his name known to my mother, she whispered to me that he was a famous man. I must carry his bag.

The waiting-room was crammed. A telegram flew from hand to hand telling that Germany had declared war on Russia. On account of our brothers in Austria.

The *Wacht am Rhein* was sung and the Song of the Flags. The professor joined in the singing, my mother as well. I was afraid of so much joy, for I could not help thinking of Gaston. If Gaston had been there I would gladly have sung too.

"Do you see the people," said the professor to my mother, "how uplifted they are and how united? Does not that in itself justify the war?" He pointed to the waiting-room, which rang with songs and shouting. The men were shouting "brother" across to one another and went about shaking hands, although few of them were acquainted. Many of them were workmen. One could recognize them by their caps. They had come from Switzerland, from Italy, from France, where they had been working on machines. They went from table to table and fraternized with rich townspeople who had just come from holidaying in the mountains. In a corner sat a man of Jewish appearance along with two frightened daughters; he kept on treating the workmen to beer, and when they sang he sang too. "We're all brothers!" shouted the workmen; the gentleman nodded rapturously and paid.

"Is it not wonderful?" said the professor. "All our social divisions have vanished."

My mother nodded. She said something about "mass emotion."

"This war," answered the professor, "is an unparalleled aesthetic experience. For the first time I have seen the soul of the people laid bare." I sat with my lemonade in front of me and still thought of Gaston. Would he be singing too? . . ."

It was three o'clock in the morning when someone sprang on

to a table and shouted that the frontier was closed. A howl, as if they all felt betrayed, was the answer. "We must get home! We must join our brothers!" Then they sang again. The professor said that he would march over the frontier on foot, if no more trains were going. What should he do here in Switzerland? It was only a neutral country.

When towards six o'clock a Swiss official announced that they had managed to get together a train which, as the absolutely last one, would leave in twenty minutes, the whole station broke into jubilation, as if we were all going to a festival.

The train was rushed. We lost the professor in the confusion. We sat down on our bags in the corridor. My mother said it did not matter; we should have to make sacrifices now. Shortly after leaving Basle we came in sight of the Rhine. Everybody rushed to the windows. The men uncovered their heads, the women leaned tenderly on their husbands' shoulders. They sang solemnly and gravely, as if they were in church. Many had tears in their eyes. And the children, who stood apart by themselves in the corridors, gazed in silent wonder at the strange solemnity of the grownups.

At Mülheim we saw the first German soldiers. They wore new uniforms of grey-green cloth, and over their helmets was a protective covering of the same material. The railway embankment was guarded by soldiers. Every hundred yards there was a sentry, and on the bridges there were patrols. They were greeted with storms of cheering. "*Die Wacht am Rhein*," cried the women and threw them fruit, cigarettes and chocolate. The soldiers waved their rifles; some kissed their hands. These were officers. . . .

Flags fluttered over the roofs of the villages. The colours of harvest, the yellow and red, gleamed heavy and languid in the soft morning light as we passed through Brandenburg. They fluttered over the huts in the vineyards, they billowed from the belfries of churches and the chimneys of farmhouses, they filled the stations with colour, they almost covered the schools, and the children waved them as they stood behind the

barriers and shouted "Hurrah!" Yellow and red. Wheat and poppies. The air smelt of them.

As we neared Freiburg, the whole train was singing. We all knew one another. Strangers shared their food together, exchanged cigarettes, presented the children with chocolate. The children were a little afraid, for they had never seen so many good people before.

I stood beside my mother at the window and did not dare to move. I thought I was dreaming. A single movement, I thought, might destroy this dream, and the people would become as indifferent or as hostile to one another as before. I held my breath and implored God to keep the miracle from coming to an end.

I did not think any longer of Gaston. The flags and the singing closed me in. My mother kissed me, strange men lifted me on their shoulders, strange ladies gave me chocolate and stroked my hair, young girls talked to me as if I were their brother—I was giddy with this incomprehensible human love.

When we drew into Freiburg, the platform was thronged with shouting people. Students in fantastic jackets sprang into the train singing. Through the open windows they kissed girls who showered flowers upon them. Elderly gentlemen had fastened little flags to their canes and carried them over their shoulders. Presents were being showered on soldiers, whose rifles were trimmed with sprays of roses as if they were all celebrating their birthday. Even the waiters in the station restaurant looked cheerful and the porters springing from the carriages laughed like benevolent uncles.

On the opposite side of the platform stood a long red transport train. In the wide-open door of the cattle trucks the laughing round faces of the soldiers hung like clusters of brown fruit. The cars waved with banners and sprays of foliage, the sides were covered with drawings in chalk. Gay groups of white-clad girls ran up to the soldiers and stuck flowers in their tunics. Before a second-class carriage in the middle of the train, where the officers walked up and down in

their fine uniforms and shining leather gaiters, a military band was playing light marches and cheerful folk-songs. When a handsome soldier seized one of the white-clad girls round the waist and gave her a resounding kiss clean on the mouth, the whole station roared "Hurrah!" New military transports kept rolling in. Even the cannons on the flat-cars were adorned with flowers and green branches. On the officers' carriage were stuck complete little birch trees, hung with brilliant ribbons, and sometimes with sausages. Everybody was laughing, the soldiers loudest of all.

Were they going on a holiday or to a festival?

As our train drew out and slowly left the station behind, the military band struck up: *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*. Deep-throated the crowd joined in, like a choral the song mounted in the clear, sunny air fluttering with banners; all took their hats off, the officers saluted elegantly, the soldiers presented arms, the young girls sang in voices as clear as their white frocks, the students shook hands, the women laid their arms tenderly round the shoulders of their husbands, and the faster the train went the louder and higher rose the singing. I was swallowed up, submerged in the singing. I could not distinguish things any longer. It was to me as if I had a thousand mothers and a thousand fathers. . . .

Then my mother bent over me, her hair brushed my cheek, and she whispered in my ear, her voice choked with emotion: "Isn't it wonderful?" I flung my arms round her. She drew me to her. "Yes," she said and nodded towards the people in the corridors standing close together like lovers, serene and happy. "Our dear German people, how terribly we have misunderstood their real nature." She was crying. A little in front of us beside the lavatory the students were singing: "No better death in all the world, than on the field to perish. . . ."

The train rolled between the rich pastures of Baden, heavy with grain. From all the towns rose shouts of rejoicing.

I was dazzled. The world lay transfigured. The war had made everything beautiful.

THE BIRTH OF THE FRENCH SOLDIER

FROM

"THE POILUS" BY JOSEPH DELTEIL

(Translated by Jacques Le Clercq)

On August 1st, France became a railway-station. Every hill sheltered a train, every village a station. From Brest to Nice and from Dunkerque to Bordeaux, it was but one immense train. Everyone took the train; the territorials along the roadbeds, the conscripts on the railroads. The brains of the General Staff were bowed over coaches and tunnels. The spirit of mothers travelled over rails.

Over the Breton moor, between the calvaries, jerk-water trains alive with Breton hats rolled by amid the noise of oceans. The Basque lines were filled with *bérets*. The Central Mountains unloaded the oats of Auvergne across the cabbage-fields. Along the Mediterranean crept the little trains of the Midi, dripping tenors and wine. In the sunlight, through the fog, France was mobilizing her children. Every corner sent forth its handsomest youngsters (for Death, that female, likes handsome youngsters), every plot of ground its fairest flower (for the Skeleton delights in flowers). The villages gave up their village-bantams and the farms their tall light lads. All France robbed herself of her blood, sending it in reservoir-coaches in the direction of the blood-factories. Cards were shuffled, drawn, and the top of the basket was for Death. Death reserved for herself the finest portion of life. In front of hedges of territorials, the supreme lads filed by, the essence of the nation, its joy and its flower, its most favored substance, its choicest dream!

These tall lads, red with health, dazzled by the wide world and by long journeys, laughing with all their heart, clad in their

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coarse Sunday best, these handsome lads covered with girls' kisses and the skins of angels, hot with journeymanship and wine, cast loose with their heedlessness and their sacks full of ham for the adventure in the depths of space: what a *gorgeous* vision of life!

All of it poured into Paris. The Gare de l'Est was the station of France. Amid the turmoil of the world's great fever, the mobilized ate their lunch on platforms ashine with oil. They sat on the steps of coaches, on the bloodless ballasting, in a deluge of sardine-cans and good humour, their boots on their cheeses and a litre of wine close to their hearts, in a flash of knives and of teeth, jovial and bantering, gentle and violent, with their large hands and their large eyes. They called to each other from the Ardèche to Caen in racy terms of the soil; they ate with relish amid a din of ribaldries. A fragrance of food rose towards a sky rich with sunlight. A phantasmagoria danced a saraband in the sun rays. The sons of the plow and of the shop, the sons of the people, free from tool-bearing and bread-winning, laughed in an atmosphere of liberty under the guard of a corporal. No more worries, rain and hay; no more bosses and no more work; but all around them a great life, empty and new; a row of Paris urchins, dirty from birth; a universe of beautiful locomotives, of houses with fine façades, of whistles—that vulgar luxury and that smell of cities that debase the heart of men, of beautiful women wherever they come from. . . .

The world had broken her shell and the almond of life was bare. That mob of young males, their bellies in the throes of digestion, ogled the girls of Paris under a radiant sky, and meditated on some base paradise.

"It's like a swell brothel!" said one of them.

At night the Gare de l'Est assumed an incomparable exterior and incomparable proportions. All this vaguely circular space, raised by sighs and roaring, this coming-and-going of enchanted machines in the smoothest directions; those whistles, that might be sounds or colors; and all that illumination in

three tones, blue, green, red, laid out with a fine disorder by some mute artist; and that interclashing of steel curves, softer in their obscure mass than the slope of hips; that impression of intelligent mystery, of heavenly coördination; that vision of mechanics and of spatial geometry,—there lay a semi-divine spectacle, a true and mighty dream!

Throughout this period, Paris was under pressure. Puissant virtues of patriotism, born deep down beneath the skulls of men, burst through and spilled out over the public squares and boulevards. To Berlin! To Berlin! The word *Berlin* filled Paris. Detachments passed, and every rifle owned the right to a flower, and every soldier owned the right to a kiss. Women softened at sight. Their dresses could no longer contain their hearts. They felt a thousand obligations of love in themselves. They distributed their lips to those young men in arms with the pride of priestesses. A kind of brotherhood like that of flowers, a white sentimental friendship, a universal innocence fell upon every creature. *Le mal*, the notion of evil—and *le mâle*, the male—disappeared. They were all children, angels. For a few days, France was Paradise on earth.

On about August 9th, news came of the French offensive in Alsace. The Army of Belfort attacked on August 7th. The same day, Bonneau's Brigade (7th Army Corps) won the first battle of the campaign at Altkirch. On August 8th, the French troops entered Mulhouse, all their bugles to windward, amid the enthusiasm of Alsace. Suddenly, every Frenchman felt his chest expand—wider for the whole of Alsace. . . .

FIRST NEWS

FROM

"NOTES ON LIFE AND LETTERS" BY JOSEPH CONRAD

. . . The session of the University was ended and the students were either all gone or going home to different parts of Poland, but the professors had not all departed yet on their respective holidays, and amongst them the tone of scepticism prevailed generally. Upon the whole there was very little inclination to talk about the possibility of a war. Nationally, the Poles felt that from their point of view there was nothing to hope from it. "Whatever happens," said a very distinguished man to me, "we may be certain that it's *our* skins which will pay for it as usual." A well-known literary critic and writer on economical subjects said to me: "War seems a material impossibility, precisely because it would mean the complete ruin of all material interest." . . .

Next day the librarian of the University invited me to come and have a look at the library which I had not seen since I was 14 years old. It was from him that I learned that the greater part of my father's MSS. was preserved there. He confessed that he had not looked them through thoroughly yet, but he told me that there was a lot of very important letters bearing on the epoch from '60 to '63, to and from many prominent Poles of that time; and he added: "There is a bundle of correspondence that will appeal to you personally. Those are letters written by your father to an intimate friend in whose papers they were found. They contain many references to yourself, though you couldn't have been more than four years old at the time. Your father seems to have been extremely interested in his son." That afternoon I went to the University,

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taking with me *my* eldest son. The attention of that young Englishman was mainly attracted by some relics of Copernicus in a glass case. I saw the bundle of letters and accepted the kind proposal of the librarian that he should have them copied for me during the holidays. In the range of the deserted vaulted rooms lined with books, full of august memories, and in the passionless silence of all this enshrined wisdom, we walked here and there talking of the past, the great historical past in which lived the inextinguishable spark of national life; and all around us the centuries-old buildings lay still and empty, composing themselves to rest after a year of work on the minds of another generation.

No echo of the German ultimatum to Russia penetrated that academical peace. But the news had come. When we stepped into the street out of the deserted main quadrangle, we three, I imagine, were the only people in the town who did not know of it. My boy and I parted from the librarian (who hurried home to pack up for his holiday) and walked on to the hotel, where we found my wife actually in the car waiting for us to take a run of some ten miles to the country house of an old school-friend of mine. He had been my greatest chum. In my wanderings about the world I had heard that his later career both at school and at the University had been of extraordinary brilliance—in classics, I believe. But in this, the iron-grey moustache period of his life, he informed me with badly concealed pride that he had gained world fame as the Inventor—no, Inventor is not the word—Producer, I believe would be the right term—of a wonderful kind of beetroot seed. The beet grown from this seed contained more sugar to the square inch—or was it to the square root?—than any kind of beet. He exported this seed, not only with profit (and even to the United States), but with a certain amount of glory which seemed to have gone slightly to his head. There is a fundamental strain of agriculturist in a Pole which no amount of brilliance, even classical, can destroy. While we were having tea outside, looking down the lovely slope of the gardens at the

view of the city in the distance, the possibilities of the war faded from our minds. Suddenly my friend's wife came to us with a telegram in her hand and said calmly: "General mobilisation, do you know?" We looked at her like men aroused from a dream. "Yes," she insisted, "they are already taking the horses out of the ploughs and carts." I said: "We had better go back to town as quick as we can," and my friend assented with a troubled look: "Yes, you had better." As we passed through villages on our way back we saw mobs of horses assembled on the commons with soldiers guarding them, and groups of villagers looking on silently at the officers with their note-books checking deliveries and writing out receipts. Some old peasant women were already weeping aloud.

When our car drew up at the door of the hotel, the manager himself came to help my wife out. In the first moment I did not quite recognise him. His luxuriant black locks were gone, his head was closely cropped, and as I glanced at it he smiled and said: "I shall sleep at the barracks to-night."

I cannot reproduce the atmosphere of that night, the first night after mobilisation. The shops and the gateways of the houses were of course closed, but all through the dark hours the town hummed with voices; the echoes of distant shouts entered the open windows of our bedroom. Groups of men talking noisily walked in the middle of the roadway escorted by distressed women; men of all callings and of all classes going to report themselves at the fortress. Now and then a military car tooting furiously would whisk through the streets empty of wheeled traffic, like an intensely black shadow under the great flood of electric lights on the grey pavement.

But what produced the greatest impression on my mind was a gathering at night in the coffee-room of my hotel of a few men of mark whom I was asked to join. It was about one o'clock in the morning. The shutters were up. For some reason or other the electric light was not switched on, and the big room was lit up only by a few tall candles, just enough for us to see each other's faces by. I saw in those faces the awful desolation of

men whose country, torn in three, found itself engaged in the contest with no will of its own and not even the power to assert itself at the cost of life. All the past was gone, and there was no future, whatever happened; no road which did not seem to lead to moral annihilation. I remember one of those men addressing me after a period of mournful silence compounded of mental exhaustion and unexpressed forebodings.

"What do you think England will do? If there is a ray of hope anywhere it is only there."

I said: "I believe I know what England will do" (this was before the news of the violation of Belgium neutrality arrived), "though I won't tell you, for I am not absolutely certain. But I can tell you what I am absolutely certain of. It is this: If England comes into the war, then, no matter who may want to make peace at the end of six months at the cost of right and justice, England will keep on fighting for years if necessary. You may reckon on that."

"What, even alone?" asked somebody across the room.

I said: "Yes, even alone. But if things go so far as that England will not be alone."

I think that at that moment I must have been inspired.

London, August 5, 1914

ANNOUNCEMENT ISSUED AT THE FOREIGN
OFFICE AT 12:15 A. M.

Owing to the summary rejection by the German Government of the request made by His Majesty's Government for assurances that the neutrality of Belgium would be respected, His Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin has received his passports, and His Majesty's Government has declared to the German Government that a state of war exists between Great Britain and Germany as from 11 P. M. on August 4.

MR. BRITLING LOOKS AT WAR

FROM

"MR. BRITLING SEES IT THROUGH" BY H. G. WELLS

Mr. Britling started for his moonlight ride about half-past nine that night. He announced that he could neither rest nor work, the war had thrown him into a fever; the driving of the automobile was just the distraction he needed; he might not, he added casually, return for a day or so. When he felt he could work again he would come back. He filled up his petrol tank by the light of an electric torch, and sat in his car in the garage and studied his map of the district. His thoughts wandered from the road to Pyecrafts to the coast, and to the possible route of a raider. Suppose the enemy anticipated a declaration of war! Here he might come, and here. . . .

He roused himself from these speculations to the business in hand.

The evening seemed as light as day, a cool moonshine filled the world. The road was silver that flushed to pink at the approach of Mr. Britling's headlight, the dark turf at the wayside and the bushes on the bank became for a moment an acid green as the glare passed. The full moon was climbing up the sky, and so bright that scarcely a star was visible in the blue grey of the heavens. Houses gleamed white a mile away, and ever and again a moth would flutter and hang in the light of the lamps, and then vanish again in the night.

Gladys was in excellent condition for a run, and so was Mr. Britling. He went neither fast nor slow, and with a quite unfamiliar confidence. Life, which had seemed all day a congested confusion darkened by threats, became cool, mysterious and aloof and with a quality of dignified reassurance.

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He steered along the narrow road by the black dogrose hedge, and so into the high road towards the village. The village was alight at several windows but almost deserted. Out beyond, a coruscation of lights burnt like a group of topaz and rubies set in the silver shield of the night. The festivities of the Flower Show were still in full progress, and the reduction of the entrance fee after seven had drawn in every lingering outsider. The roundabouts churned out their relentless music, and the bottle-shooting galleries popped and crashed. The well-patronized ostriches and motorcars flickered round in a pulsing rhythm; black, black, black, before the naphtha flares.

Mr. Britling pulled up at the side of the road, and sat for a little while watching the silhouettes move hither and thither from shadow to shadow across the bright spaces.

"On the very brink of war—on the brink of Armageddon," he whispered at last. "Do they understand? Do any of us understand?"

He slipped in his gear to starting, and was presently running quietly with his engine purring almost inaudibly along the level road to Hartleytree. The sounds behind him grew smaller and smaller, and died away leaving an immense unruffled quiet under the moon. There seemed no motion but his own, no sound but the neat, subdued, mechanical rhythm in front of his feet. Presently he ran out into the main road, and heedless of the lane that turned away towards Pyecrafts, drove on smoothly towards the east and the sea. Never before had he driven by night. He had expected a fumbling and tedious journey; he found he had come into an undreamt-of silvery splendour of motion. For it seemed as though even the automobile was running on moonlight that night. . . . Pyecrafts could wait. Indeed the later he got to Pyecrafts the more moving and romantic the little comedy of reconciliation would be. And he was in no hurry for that comedy. He felt he wanted to apprehend this vast summer calm about him, that alone of all things of the day seemed to convey anything whatever of the majestic tragedy that was happening to mankind. As one

slipped through this still vigil one could imagine for the first time the millions away there marching, the wide river valleys, villages, cities, mountain-ranges, ports and seas inaudibly busy.

"Even now," he said, "the battleships may be fighting."

He listened, but the sound was only the low intermittent drumming of his cylinders as he ran with his throttle nearly closed, down a stretch of gentle hill.

He felt that he must see the sea. He would follow the road beyond the Rodwell villages, and then turn up to the crest of Eastonbury Hill. And thither he went and saw in the gap of the low hills beyond a V-shaped level of moonlit water that glittered and yet lay still. He stopped his car by the roadside, and sat for a long time looking at this and musing. And once it seemed to him three little shapes like short black needles passed in line ahead across the molten silver.

But that may have been just the straining of the eyes. . . .

All sorts of talk had come to Mr. Britling's ears about the navies of England and France and Germany; there had been public disputes of experts, much whispering and discussion in private. We had the heavier vessels, the bigger guns, but it was not certain that we had the preëminence in science and invention. Were they relying as we were relying on Dreadnoughts, or had they their secrets and surprises for us? Tonight, perhaps, the great ships were steaming to conflict. . . .

Tonight all over the world ships must be in flight and ships pursuing; ten thousand towns must be ringing with the immediate excitement of war. . . .

Only a year ago Mr. Britling had been lunching on a battleship and looking over its intricate machinery. It had seemed to him then that there could be no better human stuff in the world than the quiet, sunburnt, disciplined men and officers he had met. . . . And our little army, too, must be gathering tonight, the little army that had been chastened and reborn in South Africa, that he was convinced was individually more gallant and self-reliant and capable than any other army in the world. He would have sneered or protested if he had heard another

Englishman say that, but in his heart he held the dear belief. . . .

And what other aviators in the world could fly as the Frenchmen and Englishmen he had met once or twice at Eastchurch and Salisbury could fly? These are things of race and national quality. Let the German cling to his gasbags. "We shall beat them in the air," he whispered. "We shall beat them on the seas. Surely we shall beat them on the seas. If we have men enough and guns enough we shall beat them on land. . . . Yet —— For years they have been preparing. . . ."

There was little room in the heart of Mr. Britling that night for any love but the love of England. He loved England now as a nation of men. There could be no easy victory. Good for us with our too easy natures that there could be no easy victory. But victory we must have now—or perish. . . .

He roused himself with a sigh, restarted his engine, and went on to find some turning place. He still had a colourless impression that the journey's end was Pyecrafts.

"We must all do the thing we can," he thought, and for a time the course of his automobile along a winding down-hill road held his attention so that he could not get beyond it. He turned about and ran up over the hill again and down long slopes inland, running very softly and smoothly with his lights devouring the road ahead and sweeping the banks and hedges beside him, and as he came down a little hill through a village he heard a confused clatter and jingle of traffic ahead, and saw the danger triangle that warns of cross-roads. He slowed down and then pulled up abruptly.

Riding across the gap between the cottages was a string of horsemen, and then a grey cart, and then a team drawing a heavy object—a gun, and then more horsemen, and then a second gun. It was all a dim brown procession in the moonlight. A mounted officer came up beside him and looked at him and then went back to the cross-roads, but as yet England was not troubling about spies. Four more guns passed, and then a string of carts and more mounted men, sitting stiffly. Nobody was

singing or shouting; scarcely a word was audible, and through all the column there was an effect of quiet efficient haste. And so they passed, and rumbled and jingled and clattered out of the scene, leaving Mr. Britling in his car in the dreaming village. He restarted his engine once more, and went his way thoughtfully.

He went so thoughtfully that presently he missed the road to Pyecrafts—if ever he had been on the road to Pyecrafts at all—altogether. He found himself upon a highway running across a flattish plain, and presently discovered by the sight of the Great Bear, faint but traceable in the blue overhead, that he was going due north. Well, presently he would turn south and west; that in good time; now he wanted to feel; he wanted to think. How could he best help England in the vast struggle for which the empty silence and beauty of this night seemed to be waiting? But indeed he was not thinking at all, but feeling, feeling wonder, as he had never felt it since his youth had passed from him. This war might end nearly everything in the world as he had known the world; that idea struggled slowly through the moonlight into consciousness, and won its way to dominance in his mind.

The character of the road changed; the hedges fell away, the pine trees and pine woods took the place of the black squat shapes of the hawthorn and oak and apple. The houses grew rarer and the world emptier and emptier, until he could have believed that he was the only man awake and out-of-doors in all the slumbering land. . . .

For a time a little thing caught hold of his dreaming mind. Continually as he ran on, black, silent birds rose startled out of the dust of the road before him, and fluttered noiselessly beyond his double wedge of light. What sort of birds could they be? Were they night-jars? Were they different kinds of birds snatching at the quiet of the night for a dust bath in the sand? This little independent thread of inquiry ran through the texture of his mind and died away. . . .

And at one place there was a great bolting of rabbits across the road, almost under his wheels. . . .

The phrases he had used that afternoon at Claverings came back presently into his head. They were, he felt assured, the phrases that had to be said now. This war could be seen as the noblest of wars, as the crowning struggle of mankind against national dominance and national aggression; or else it was a mere struggle of nationalities and pure destruction and catastrophe. Its enormous significances, he felt, must not be lost in any petty bickering about the minor issues of the conflict. But were these enormous significances being stated clearly enough? Were they being understood by the mass of liberal and pacific thinkers? He drove more and more slowly as these questions crowded upon his attention until at last he came to a stop altogether. . . . "Certain things must be said clearly," he whispered. "Certain things — The meaning of England. . . . The deep and long-unspoken desire for kindness and fairness. . . . Now is the time for speaking. It must be put as straight now as her gun-fire, as honestly as the steering of her ships."

Phrases and paragraphs began to shape themselves in his mind as he sat with one arm on his steering-wheel.

Suddenly he roused himself, turned over the map in the map-case beside him, and tried to find his position. . . .

So far as he could judge he had strayed into Suffolk. . . .

About one o'clock in the morning he found himself in Newmarket. Newmarket too was a moonlit emptiness, but as he hesitated at the cross-roads he became aware of a policeman standing quite stiff and still at the corner by the church.

"Matching's Easy?" he cried.

"That road, Sir, until you come to Market Saffron, and then to the left. . . ."

Mr. Britling had a definite purpose now in his mind, and he drove faster, but still very carefully and surely. He was already within a mile or so of Market Saffron before he remembered that he had made a kind of appointment with himself at Pyecrafts. He stared at two conflicting purposes. He turned over certain possibilities.

At the Market Saffron cross-roads he slowed down, and for a moment he hung undecided.

"Oliver," he said, and as he spoke he threw over his steering-wheel towards the homeward way. . . . He finished his sentence when he had negotiated the corner safely. "Oliver must have her. . . ."

And then, perhaps fifty yards farther along, and this time almost indignantly: "She ought to have married him long ago. . . ."

He put his automobile in the garage, and then went round under the black shadow of his cedars to the front door. He had no key and for a time he failed to rouse his wife by flinging pebbles and gravel at her half-open window. But at last he heard her stirring and called out to her.

He explained he had returned because he wanted to write. He wanted indeed to write quite urgently. He went straight up to his room, lit his reading-lamp, made himself some tea, and changed into his nocturnal suit. Daylight found him still writing very earnestly at his pamphlet. The title he had chosen was: "And Now War Ends."

A FRENCHMAN SEES THE WAR

FROM

"CLERAMBAULT" BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

(Translated by Katherine Miller)

Agénor Clerambault sat under an arbour in his garden at St. Prix, reading to his wife and children an ode that he had just written, dedicated to Peace, ruler of men and things, "Ara Pacis Augustae." In it he wished to celebrate the near approach of universal brotherhood. It was a July evening; a last rosy light lay on the tree-tops, and through the luminous haze, like a veil over the slopes of the hillside and the grey plain of the distant city, the windows on Montmartre burned like sparks of gold. Dinner was just over. Clerambault leaned across the table where the dishes yet stood, and as he spoke his glance full of simple pleasure passed from one to the other of his three auditors, sure of meeting the reflection of his own happiness.

His wife Pauline followed the flight of his thought with difficulty. After the third phrase anything read aloud made her feel drowsy, and the affairs of her household took on an absurd importance; one might say that the voice of the reader made them chirp like birds in a cage. It was in vain that she tried to follow on Clerambault's lips, and even to imitate with her own, the words whose meaning she no longer understood; her eye mechanically noted a hole in the cloth, her fingers picked at the crumbs on the table, her mind flew back to a troublesome bill, till as her husband's eye seemed to catch her in the act, hastily snatching at the last words she had heard, she went into raptures over a fragment of verse,—for she could never quote poetry accurately. "What was that, Agénor? Do repeat that

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last line. How beautiful it is." Little Rose, her daughter, frowned, and Maxime, the grown son, was annoyed and said impatiently: "You are always interrupting, Mamma!"

Clerambault smiled and patted his wife's hand affectionately. He had married her for love when he was young, poor, and unknown, and together they had gone through years of hardship. She was not quite on his intellectual level and the difference did not diminish with advancing years, but Clerambault loved and respected his helpmate, and she strove, without much success, to keep step with her great man of whom she was so proud. He was extraordinarily indulgent to her. His was not a critical nature—which was a great help to him in life in spite of innumerable errors of judgment; but as these were always to the advantage of others, whom he saw at their best, people laughed but liked him. He did not interfere with their money hunt and his countrified simplicity was refreshing to the world-weary, like a wild-growing thicket in a city square.

Maxime was amused by all this, knowing what it was worth. He was a good-looking boy of nineteen with bright laughing eyes, and in the Parisian surroundings he had been quick to acquire the gift of rapid, humorous observation, dwelling on the outside view of men and things more than on ideas. Even in those he loved, nothing ridiculous escaped him, but it was without ill-nature. Clerambault smiled at the youthful impertinence which did not diminish Maxime's admiration for his father but rather added to its flavour. A boy in Paris would tweak the Good Lord by the beard, by way of showing affection!

Rosine was silent according to her habit; it was not easy to know her thoughts as she listened, bent forward, her hands folded and her arms leaning on the table. Some natures seem made to receive, like the earth which opens itself silently to every seed. Many seeds fall and remain dormant; none can tell which will bring forth fruit. The soul of the young girl was of this kind; her face did not reflect the words of the reader as

did Maxime's mobile features, but the slight flush on her cheek and the moist glance of her eyes under their drooping lids showed inward ardour and feeling. She looked like those Florentine pictures of the Virgin stirred by the magical salutation of the Archangel. Clerambault saw it all and as he glanced around his little circle his eye rested with special delight on the fair bending head which seemed to feel his look.

On this July evening these four people were united in a bond of affection and tranquil happiness of which the central point was the father, the idol of the family.

Clerambault had just finished with a Schilleresque vision of the fraternal joys promised in the future. Maxime, carried away by his enthusiasm in spite of his sense of humour, had given the orator a round of applause all by himself. Pauline noisily asked if Agénor had not heated himself in speaking, and amid the excitement Rosine silently pressed her lips to her father's hand.

The servant brought in the mail and the evening papers, but no one was in a hurry to read them. The news of the day seemed behind the times compared with the dazzling future. Maxime however took up the popular middle-class sheet, and threw his eye over the columns. He started at the latest items and exclaimed; "Hullo! War is declared." No one listened to him: Clerambault was dreaming over the last vibrations of his verses; Rosine lost in a calm ecstasy; the mother alone, who could not fix her mind on anything, buzzing about like a fly, chanced to catch the last word,—“Maxime, how can you be so silly?” she cried, but Maxime protested, showing his paper with the declaration of war between Austria and Servia.

“War with whom?”—“With Servia?”—“Is that all?” said the good woman, as if it were a question of something in the moon.

Maxime however persisted,—*doctus cum libro*,—arguing that from one thing to another, this shock no matter how distant, might bring about a general explosion; but Clerambault,

who was beginning to come out of his pleasant trance, smiled calmly, and said that nothing would happen.

"It's only a bluff," he declared, "like so many we have had for the last thirty years; we get them regularly every spring and summer; just bullying and sabre-rattling." People did not believe in war, no one wanted it; war had been proved to be impossible,—it was a bugbear that must be got out of the heads of free democracies . . . and he enlarged on this theme. The night was calm and sweet; all around familiar sounds and sights; the chirp of crickets in the fields, a glow-worm shining in the grass,—delicious perfume of honey-suckle. Far away the noise of a distant train; the little fountain tinkled, and in the moonless sky revolved the luminous track of the light on the Eiffel Tower.

The two women went into the house, and Maxime, tired of sitting down, ran about the garden with his little dog, while through the open windows floated out an air of Schumann's, which Rosine, full of timid emotion, was playing on the piano. Clerambault left alone, threw himself back in his wicker chair, glad to be a man, to be alive, breathing in the balm of this summer night with a thankful heart.

Six days later . . . Clerambault had spent the afternoon in the woods, and like the monk in the legend, lying under an oak tree, drinking in the song of a lark, a hundred years might have gone by him like a day. He could not tear himself away till night-fall. Maxime met him in the vestibule; he came forward smiling but rather pale, and said: "Well, Papa, we are in for it this time!" and he told him the news. The Russian mobilisation, the state of war in Germany;—Clerambault stared at him unable to comprehend, his thoughts were so far removed from these dark follies. He tried to dispute the facts, but the news was explicit, and so they went to the table, where Clerambault could eat but little.

He sought for reason why these two crimes should lead to nothing. Common-sense, public opinion, the prudence of governments, the repeated assurances of the socialists, Jaurès'

firm stand;—Maxime let him talk, he was thinking of other things,—like his dog with his ears pricked up for the sounds of the night. . . . Such a pure lovely night! Those who recall the last evenings of July, 1914, and the even more beautiful evening of the first day of August, must keep in their minds the wonderful splendour of Nature, as with a smile of pity she stretched out her arms to the degraded, self-devouring human race.

It was nearly ten o'clock when Clerambault ceased to talk, for no one had answered him. They sat then in silence with heavy hearts, listlessly occupied or seeming to be, the women with their work, Clerambault with his eyes, but not his mind, on a book. Maxime went out on the porch and smoked, leaning on the railing and looking down on the sleeping garden and the fairy-like play of the light and shadows on the path.

The telephone bell made them start. Someone was calling Clerambault, who went slowly to answer, half-asleep and absent so that at first he did not understand: "Hullo! is that you, old man?" as he recognised the voice of a brother-author in Paris, telephoning him from a newspaper office. Still he could not seem to understand; "I don't hear,—Jaurès? What about Jaurès? . . . Oh, my God!" Maxime full of a secret apprehension had listened from a distance; he ran and caught the receiver from his father's hand, as Clerambault let it drop with a despairing gesture. "Hullo, Hullo! What do you say? Jaurès assassinated! . . ." As exclamations of pain and anger crossed each other on the wire, Maxime made out the details, which he repeated to his family in a trembling voice. Rosine had led Clerambault back to the table, where he sat down completely crushed. Like the classic Fate, the shadow of a terrible misfortune settled over the house. It was not only the loss of his friend that chilled his heart,—the kind gay face, the cordial hand, the voice which drove away the clouds,—but the loss of the last hope of the threatened people. With a touching, child-like confidence he felt Jaurès to be the only man who could

avert the gathering storm, and he fallen, like Atlas, the sky would crumble.

Maxime rushed off to the station to get the news in Paris, promising to come back later in the evening, but Clerambault stayed in the isolated house, from which in the distance could be seen the far-off phosphorescence of the city. He had not stirred from the seat where he had fallen stupefied. This time he could no longer doubt, the catastrophe was coming, was upon them already. Madame Clerambault begged him to go to bed, but he would not listen to her. His thought was in ruins; he could distinguish nothing steady or constant, could not see any order, or follow an idea, for the walls of his inward dwelling had fallen in, and through the dust which rose, it was impossible to see what remained intact. He feared there was nothing left but a mass of suffering, at which he looked with dull eyes, unconscious of his falling tears. Maxime did not come home, carried away by the excitement at Paris.

Madame Clerambault had gone to bed, but about one o'clock she came and persuaded him to come up to their room, where he lay down; but when Pauline had fallen asleep—anxiety made her sleepy—he got up and went into the next room. He groaned, unable to breathe; his pain was so close and oppressive, that he had no room to draw his breath. With the prophetic hyper-sensitiveness of the artist, who often lives in tomorrow with more intensity than in the present moment, his agonised eyes and heart foresaw all that was to be. This inevitable war between the greatest nations of the world, seemed to him the failure of civilisation, the ruin of the most sacred hopes for human brotherhood. He was filled with horror at the vision of a maddened humanity, sacrificing its most precious treasures, strength, and genius, its highest virtues, to the bestial idol of war. It was to him a moral agony, a heart-rending communion with these unhappy millions. To what end? And of what use had been all the efforts of the ages? His heart seemed gripped by the void; he felt he could no longer live if his faith in the reason of men and their mutual love was

destroyed, if he was forced to acknowledge that the Credo of his life and art rested on a mistake, that a dark pessimism was the answer to the riddle of the world.

He turned his eyes away in terror, he was afraid to look it in the face, this monster who was there, whose hot breath he felt upon him. Clerambault implored,—he did not know who or what—that this might not be, that it might not be. Anything rather than this should be true! But the devouring fact stood just behind the opening door. . . . Through the whole night he strove to close that door. . . .

At last towards morning, an animal instinct began to wake, coming from he did not know where, which turned his despair towards the secret need of finding a definite and concrete cause, to fasten the blame on a man, or a group of men, and angrily hold them responsible for the misery of the world. It was as yet but a brief apparition, the first faint sign of a strange obscure, imperious soul, ready to break forth, the soul of the multitude. . . . It began to take shape when Maxime came home, for after the night in the streets of Paris, he fairly sweated with it; his very clothes, the hairs of his head, were impregnated. Worn out, excited, he could not sit down; his only thought was to go back again. The decree of mobilisation was to come out that day, war was certain, it was necessary, beneficial; some things must be put an end to, the future of humanity was at stake, the freedom of the world was threatened. "They" had counted on Jaurès' murder to sow dissension and raise riots in the country they meant to attack, but the entire nation had risen to rally round its leaders, the sublime days of the great Revolution were re-born. . . . Clerambault did not discuss these statements, he merely asked: "Do you think so? Are you quite sure?" It was a sort of hidden appeal. He wanted Maxime to state, to redouble his assertions. The news Maxime had brought added to the chaos, raised it to a climax, but at the same time it began to direct the distracted forces of his mind towards a fixed point, as the first bark of the shepherd's dog drives the sheep together.

Clerambault had but one wish left, to rejoin the flock, rub himself against the human animals, his brothers, feel with them, act with them. . . . Though exhausted by sleeplessness, he started, in spite of his wife, to take the train for Paris with Maxime. They had to wait a long time at the station, and also in the train, for the tracks were blocked, and the cars crowded; but in the common agitation Clerambault found calm. He questioned and listened, everybody fraternised, and not being sure yet what they thought, everyone felt that they thought alike. The same questions, the same trials menaced them, but each man was no longer alone to stand or fall, and the warmth of this contact was reassuring. Class distinctions were gone; no more workmen or gentlemen, no one looked at your clothes or your hands; they only looked at your eyes where they saw the same flame of life, wavering before the same impending death. All these people were so visibly strangers to the causes of the fatality, of this catastrophe, that their innocence led them like children to look elsewhere for the guilty. It comforted and quieted their conscience. Clerambault breathed more easily when he got to Paris. A stoical and virile melancholy had succeeded to the agony of the night. He was however only at the first stage.

*From the London Daily Mail
August 5, 1914*

ALL-NIGHT SCENES

DEMONSTRATING CROWDS ROUND THE PALACE

Shortly after eleven o'clock last night the King and Queen appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, and the enthusiasm of the crowd was tremendous. At 1:30 this morning the Mall was packed with people marching and singing, and there was still a large number at 3 A. M.

THE INVASION

FROM

"A HILLTOP ON THE MARNE" BY MILDRED ALDRICH

You can get some idea of how exhausted I was on that night of Wednesday, September 2, when I tell you that I waked the next morning to find that I had a picket at my gate. I did not know until Amélie came to get my coffee ready the next morning—that was Thursday, September 3—can it be that it is only five days ago! She also brought me news that they were preparing to blow up the bridges on the Marne; that the post-office had gone; that the English were cutting the telegraph wires.

While I was taking my coffee, quietly, as if it were an everyday occurrence, she said: "Well, madame, I imagine that we are going to see the Germans. Père is breaking an opening into the underground passage under the stable, and we are going to put all we can out of sight. Will you please gather up what you wish to save, and it can be hidden there?"

I don't know that I ever told you that all the hill is honey-combed with those old subterranean passages, like the one we saw at Provins. They say that they go as far as Crésy-en-Brie, and used to connect the royal palace there with one on this hill.

Naturally I gave a decided refusal to any move of that sort, so far as I was concerned. My books and portraits are the only things I should be eternally hurt to survive. To her argument that the books could be put there,—there was room enough,—I refused to listen. I had no idea of putting my books underground to be mildewed. Besides, if it had been possible I would not have attempted it—and it distinctly was impossible. I felt a good deal like the Belgian *réfugiés* I had seen,—all so well

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dressed; if my house was going up, it was going up in its best clothes. I had just been uprooted once—a horrid operation—and I did not propose to do it again so soon. To that my mind was made up.

Luckily for me—for Amélie was as set as I was—the argument was cut short by a knock at the front door. I opened it to find standing there a pretty French girl whom I had been seeing every day, as, morning and evening, she passed my gate to and from the railway station. Sooner or later I should have told you about her if all this excitement had not put it out of my mind and my letters. I did not know her name. I had never got to asking Amélie who she was, though I was a bit surprised to find any one of her type here where I had supposed there were only farmers and peasants.

She apologized for presenting herself so informally: said she had come, "*de la parte de maman*," to ask me what I proposed to do. I replied at once, "I am staying."

She looked a little surprised: said her mother wished to do the same, but that her only brother was with the colors; that he had confided his young wife and two babies to her, and that the Germans were so brutal to children that she did not dare risk it.

"Of course, you know," she added, "that everyone has left Couilly; all the shops are closed, and nearly everyone has gone from Voisins and Quincy. The mayor's wife left last night. Before going she came to us and advised us to escape at once, and even found us a horse and cart—the trains are not running. So mother thought that, as you were a foreigner, and all alone, we ought not to go without at least offering you a place in the wagon—the chance to go with us."

I was really touched, and told her so, but explained that I should stay. She was rather insistent—said her mother would be so distressed at leaving me alone with only a little group of women and children about me, who might, at the last moment, be panic-stricken.

I explained to her as well as I could that I was alone in the

into the schoolmaster's arms and smiled welcome to his new existence.—Consciousness vanished with his heart's beat.

Clemens dropped Werner's body on to the floor of the trench and took over command.

"Kill me! Kill me!" shrieked something that was unlike any human voice. The schoolmaster heeded it not, and when the drummer ran up, crying: "The curate's had both eyes shot out," he ordered him to go to his post. But himself he crept forward alone along the ground.—Rockets went out in the darkness of the gully. Behind him he left the whimpering. He knew well that it was lamentation and agony, but his chin remained hard-set. His fist was Will.

There was a knock. The corps commander called: "Come in!" "The Commander-in-Chief." Generals and staff officers entered. The corps commander stood up. They exchanged salutes. "How far?" asked the Commander-in-Chief. "On the same spot, sir," answered the corps commander. The other gnawed at his moustache. "How is that?" "The men can do no more." He took a file from the table, "Here are the reports of the losses." The Commander-in-Chief ran his eye over them and threw them down on the floor, remarking: "Obviously, we're bound to have losses. I expect the English to attack at Arras. I can't splurge all our material down here. We must manage with these corps. Four hundred thousand gone? I reckoned it at that." The corps commander replied: "Six more corps, and Verdun falls." The other lit a cigarette. "You're getting an old man, General." "I stand by the opening paragraph of the instructions, and the principles of our great King, who says an attack with insufficient forces is a . . ." "Kindly think that over in your home." The Commander-in-Chief turned to an officer of his own staff. "You stay here until this mess is cleared up again." The corps commander felt for the back of a chair and faced the officers. "Gentlemen, unless you propose to storm the fortress yourselves, you won't get much farther. . . ." but the Commander-in-Chief saluted curtly and left the room with his staff. The operation orders for the next

day lay on the table before the corps commander. "Another six hundred lives!—Come in!" He went to the door. "Is anybody there?" But there was only the buzz of telephones below. Then suddenly he crumpled up the order and, drawn with primeval force toward the thunder of gullies, cried: "The thunder of guns!" and ran out of his room, over the snow, over the white desolation, ran trembling into the night towards the mountains. . . .

PART III

ECHOES FROM THE STORM

ECHOES FROM THE STORM

3

STRANGE MEETING

FROM

"POEMS" BY WILFRED OWEN

*It seemed that out of the battle I escaped
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since scooped
Through granites which Titanic wars had groined.
Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.
Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and stared
With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
Lilting distressful hands as if to bless!
And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall.
With a thousand fears that vision's face was grained;
Yet no blood reached there from the upper ground,
And no guns thumped, or down the flues made moan.
"Strange, friend," I said, "Here is no cause to mourn."
"None," said the other, "Save the undone years,
The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,
Was my life also; I went hunting wild
After the wildest beauty in the world,
Which lies not calm in eyes, or braided hair,
But mocks the steady running of the hour,
And if it grieves, grieves richlier than here!
For by my glee might many men have laughed,
And of my weeping something has been left,
Which must die now. I mean the truth untold,
The pity of war, the pity war distilled.*

*Now men will go content with what we spoiled.
Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.
They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress,
None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress.
Courage was mine, and I had mystery;
Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery;
To miss the march of this retreating world
Into vain citadels that are not walled.
Then, when much blood has clogged their chariot-wheels
I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,
Even with truths that lie too deep for taint.
I would have poured my spirit without stint
But not through wounds; not on the cess of war.
Foreheads of men have bled where no wounds were.
I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
I knew you in this dark; for so you frowned
Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed.
I parried; but my hands were loath and cold.
Let us sleep now. . . ."*

(This poem was found among the author's papers after his death. It ends on this strange note.)

D'ARCHEVILLE: A PORTRAIT

FROM

"THE SPANISH FARM TRILOGY" BY R. H. MOTTRAM

A wet grayness—such as only comes to perfection round the shores of the North Sea. A heavily-paved, rather narrow street between substantial houses, none very new. An atmosphere of pretty good cookery and pretty bad drains. It is morning—spring—for the steady wind is stronger than the fitful sun. Something in the picture wants to say French, but can't quite say it. This North Sea grayness forbids us to think of Switzerland, so it must be Belgium. Certainly Belgium in this rather heavily-furnished room—and a queer feeling of spring cleaning—no, a more catastrophic upset than that—furniture pushed about. Maps, pencils, chits, revolver ammunition on the mantelpiece. A shamefaced, necessitous communism about the bottles and etceteras on the sideboard. We should not be so ready to share, did we not fear that tomorrow we ourselves may be in dire want. By the way, the upper panes of the window have been broken and mended with flattened-out biscuit tins. Ah, that's it! War! It is war-time.

It is not wholly a disadvantage that he appears to me against a background of war. To anyone interested in national characteristics it is perhaps an advantage, for these never stand out more clearly than when outlined by uniform and conditioned by the drastic expediency of a campaign. The very figures grouped about him help him to be most French, of the Frenchmen who were in their "floreau"—their twenties, between 1914 and 1918.

Let me touch those other figures in first, for they need but

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a stroke or two. They composed the "C" Mess of the Nth Infantry Division of the British Army at Poperinghe in March, 1916. There is not a word in that sentence that is unnecessary to an appreciation of him. March, 1916, was the moment at which the New or Kitchener Armies had recovered from Loos and not succumbed to the Somme; Poperinghe was the rail-head for that essentially English battlefield, the Ypres Salient. The fact that our divisions already ran to nth in number shows that there were more unmilitary civilians in that army than there have been in any British army since the civil wars of the seventeenth century. The "C" Mess was the one in which the middle-class professional man lodged, the few remaining regulars being in "A" with the General, or in "B" with the chief Veterinary. Now regular officers of any nation are just soldiers. The technical specialists of "C" Mess—Padre, Assistant Director of Medical Services, Dados, Signals, Supplies, myself, were English all the time, soldiers by momentary accident. Hence our importance.

Against us, as against no group of real soldiers, Georges d'Archeville is silhouetted. Truly, someone had said, "I hear this new French liaison officer is messing with us"; but the news only elicited that sort of grunt that greeted the news of those days, confined as it was to so-and-so having been killed and someone else sent to replace him. It made no impression, but when a high, rather throaty voice was heard in the passage: "This 'C' Mess? Is the Mess President about?" I became aware of D'Archeville, I shall never forget him until I die. I should like someone to remember him even after that. That first lunch together told us but little; probably he was trying his hardest to be elaborately English, certainly he was taking his duties as Liaison Officer very, very seriously all the time. He was wonderfully successful—spoke our island tongue with glib fluency—chose subjects which he might be supposed to think we preferred—drank whisky—then lit his pipe, and went about his liaisoning with a "I must be off. So long!" which was very nearly perfect. But not quite.

As I went about that afternoon, preventing mules in wet meadows from eating the bark of Holland elms, sending parties of khaki-colored men away down paved roads, I got him into better proportion. His hair and eyes were darker, his skin more olive, his uniform more sky-blue and strawberry than any English officer's ever were or will be. His voice was too excitable, his affability too obvious, his talk about polo, which he must have imagined to be the popular game of people like ourselves, as it is of regular soldiers, too offhand to be convincing. With us the public-school-taught tradition of the British Army still hovered. None of us talked "in the Mess" either loud or long. While I do not suppose that any of us (except, perhaps, the Padre) could boast of an education more expensive than that of a country-town grammar school, we were whole-heartedly English in our snobbery, and carefully avoided "shops" or any topic upon which anyone had any special knowledge. It was "not done."

Now D'Archeville, I felt, was the other thing that Western Europe contains. He was the man from the Mediterranean who, extending his culture to the Atlantic or even the Channel, had no real foothold on the North Sea. He was the man to whom things were black or white, to whom it was either day or night, to whom our eternal compromise with the supposed standards of a non-existent aristocracy would be quite incomprehensible.

In this frame of mind, that night, as our tinned and chlorinated meal ended, I heard D'Archeville proposing a toast. I took a swift look round that circle of blunt, fresh-colored English faces. They were all blinking and trying not to look at each other or at D'Archeville. To drink "the King" was usual, because, although most of us were what is called in England "practical teetotallers"—men too busy to take anything in the middle of the day, but who kept a bottle of whisky in the house, sometimes drank some, and treated our wives to a bottle of Beaune after golf on Saturdays—yet once we became officers we felt obliged to keep up Army ritual. But beyond that

—no! What was this foreign fellow with the vivid face saying? “Entente Cordiale”—I because I liked D’Archeville, the Padre because he loved his neighbor as himself, raised our glasses. There was a general grunt and a gurgling noise, and everyone began talking. But the Supply Officer, a heavily-built exciseman, kept eyeing D’Archeville, as if to catch him out evading the regulations.

He had thus established himself on our consciousness, when the Division went out to “rest.” Blessed word! We, the division-of-all-work, the Cinderella of the Salient, were going out right behind Hazebrouck for a month. Few of us saw that metropolis more than twice a year. Incidentally, the tension being relaxed, we had much more leisure to observe each other and ourselves. After the first week, the glamor was all gone. Away from the Line, the War lost even the feeble reasonableness that Death lent it. We began asking ourselves how long it would be possible to live with six other individuals with whom each one of us had no common bond but that of having got mixed up in this affair—to exist in this bankrupt-boarding-house state of existence, whose very leisure only made us want more fervently to go home. In such circumstances D’Archeville was invaluable. He could and did suggest and carry out almost a revolution in our food—bullied or cajoled farmers’ wives to selling to us, and cooking for us, things we had never heard of. He had a French view of the importance of the stomach—much more helpful than the English careworn avoidance of the subject.

His voluble cheerfulness was punctuated with tiny slips of grammar and of our suburban “good taste”—and behind it all lay the continuous interest in what the fellow would do next. There was not so much insular prejudice in this latter sentiment as might be supposed. During the heartrending leisures of “rest,” another of D’Archeville’s qualities—perhaps his main quality—had come out. We others were, severally, a clergyman, doctor, architect, exciseman, polytechnic lecturer and shipping clerk, who had become temporary soldiers, and didn’t

care how soon they returned to their proper avocations. D'Archeville, on the contrary, was—Nothing. Not even a soldier. Apparently, the War once over, he would go back to Nothing. Born of the small nobility (his father was a Baron, title so incomprehensible as to verge on the ludicrous), he had been taught as accomplishments to ride, shoot, dance, speak English and to sing. He appeared to live in a small château of sorts with his father and mother, who owned some farms and some land on which were vineyards or houses, but when there was no shooting, and when he had, for the nonce, finished calling on all the neighbors, he appeared to live in Paris and have a "high old time." The expression is his own and does great credit to his knowledge of our language. I suppose there were people like him in England in Georgian days. There are none now.

Imagine, therefore, how interesting he was to watch. Not that he held himself out to be in any way representative of his nation except in his official position of Liaison Officer between the Division and the local French people, and French civil and military authorities, and even troops, where we touched them. He was even good enough to point out that his formation was recruited from the most incongruous elements. He said: "In my corps we have all the fellows of good family and all the *maîtres d'hôtel*." Ah! but we had not grasped, yet, of what aspect of the French nature he was deeply typical. Certainly he was no industrial nor agricultural, learned or official, as I supposed most Frenchmen must be. He was something far deeper—all the more because, in our hard-working, middle-aged, married professional-class mess, he was peculiarly Nothing—a man of empty life. A mere Frenchman, and that was all.

Another thing that came out under the influence of "rest" was the question of morals—or, to be more exact, of Sunday. I suppose English and French views of that day are fixed, apart, and never will meet until the League of Nations educates us to an incredible degree of cosmopolitanism. We others considered ourselves modern business men, enfranchised from the puritan

shibboleths of our forefathers. But were we? Did we not drift into the habit of doing nothing on a Sunday afternoon? Did we not, one after another, when we thought the others were not attending, apologize to the Padre for our non-appearance at the service which he, in spite of the most withering indifference, managed to hold in some barn or stable? Did we not, after lunch, get away into any corner where we could keep our feet warm, or even sit down brazenly in the "Mess" (dis-mantled *salle à manger* of some small rentier) with canteen block-note pad, to write home to mother, wife or child? Did we not, after tea, go off, two by two, for a walk round those Flemish meadows, with all an Englishman's instinctive, sentimental regard for the first bud and the bird's last call? Of what were we thinking? Of our dear English Sunday, which began, if we were lucky, on Friday night, or at worst, by Saturday noon, when we said to our wives: "My dear, if you'll hurry up, we can get in a round (or two rounds) of golf!" Of English Sunday morning, lying late, of tea and a real white enamelled bath, of breakfasting heavily before morning service (I hope!); of English Sunday midday dinner (roast beef and apple tart); of the sedate walk round the park with the children (because the golf course was closed), and Sunday evening with its: "No, my dear, I didn't think of going to evening service. I rather thought we might talk of our spending next week at — if we could get Aunt Jessie to come and mind the children." O golden English Sunday, oh! Peace on Earth and Goodwill!

D'Archeville, I think, would have found the whole thing totally incomprehensible and utterly boring. He did not share our dreams. He went to Mass early in the morning, and later would be found getting into a borrowed car, or even on horseback, bound for a destination which he never divulged, but which instead of appearing golden was rather redolent of purple and heliotrope. The Supply Officer, always the least sympathetic, would not fail to remark: "He's up to some game!" the inference having obviously a feminine direction.

I believe he was right, but always disliked the queer note of grudging envy.

Was D'Archeville immoral? Gentles, let us face the truth; D'Archeville was immoral, just as immoral as it may be to be born in the Artois instead of in Norfolk, and no more. He was a man who, geographically, climatically, racially, found it comic that six men of thirty years of age, or a little over, were married, had children, and had dismissed sex from their minds. He regarded sex as a matter for adequate catering as he regarded the stomach. He was probably very selfish as regards women, and easily became brutal. Was he immoral? Were we immoral? Let us face the truth; we were just as immoral in our own island way. Practically teetotallers, we found, under the stress of war, that a good stiff whisky helped us to sleep without thinking of the cosmic stupidity in which we were involved. Insensibly that whisky became two or three, invaded lunch, established itself in the middle of the morning. The fault, if any, lies with Society, the civilized society of Western Europe, which could neither foresee, prevent nor control such a war. Some of us, since, replanted in our right environment among wife and children, and steady engrossing business, have thrown off the habit. Men of a certain age or temperament have not.

Were we more or less immoral than D'Archeville? We were, under pressure, just the same self-indulgent humanity, whose outlet was different, the difference dictated by accident of climate and race, for D'Archeville could not drink three whiskies running, and, I believe, disliked the taste of it. Not there is the striking point of his portrait, but in another downrightness of his, that none of us could emulate or understand.

Our month's "rest" came to an end.

None too soon for D'Archeville. The "news" of those days consisted in the bi-weekly attacks of the German Army upon Verdun, with their accompanying twenty thousand or so prisoners and casualties to the French. D'Archeville became somber. At length, just as we were about to move, he burst out:

"It is time! When are you going to do something, you others?" We took it very well. We did not feel that we had been having much of a picnic all the winter, and the rumors of the Somme preparations were already leaking through. Nevertheless, after D'Archeville had gone up to Army Headquarters to see his chief, the Supply Officer said:

"That fellow's a spy!"

"What?" Everyone was incredulous.

"Of course he is. He speaks German too well!"

I felt it to be absurd, and replied warmly: "I wish you or I spoke French half as well."

The Supply Officer waved all that aside. "You heard what he said. Damn'd insulting!"

"My dear fellow" (I liked the Padre, with his sweet reasonableness), "he probably feels that French culture is at stake. If Verdun falls—and it is not easy to see how it can be saved—we shall be able to get back to the Channel—but the French ——?"

Certainly we did not see our friend for a day or so. In the upset of changing quarters no one remarked upon it, except the Supply Officer, who said: "I told you so, he's cleared off!" When he did reappear he was more vivid than ever, his voice higher, his cordiality more obtrusive.

"No, I'm not 'dining in,' " he was saying; "in fact, I've come to say good-bye!"

"Got a promotion?"

"No, I'm going to begin all over again; I am going into the French Flying Corps!"

"Whew!"

"Well, we are losing too many men, and I am of the right age! So long, all!"

He went, leaving an uncomfortable silence behind him. True, all of us had been infantry officers, if not infantry privates, in the line. None of us had got our jobs by favoritism, but by the possession of various sorts of technical knowledge that the army wanted, and had sent urgent messages around all

its civilian-filled battalions to obtain. We had long fathomed the utter futility of trench-fighting—the impossibility of one man, more or less, making any difference with his individual rifle or bomb—so that we worked away at our jobs with clear consciences. And yet—and yet—now that this Frenchman had gone and thrown up his comfortable job at Divisional Headquarters, and had deliberately volunteered for a corps where the average “life” of an officer was about six weeks, we all felt a twinge. No one said: “That’s the stuff to give ’em!” (an expression just coming into vogue); because someone else might have said: “Then, why don’t you or I give it ’em? If D’Archeville can, so can we!” No one remarked on the matter; we stuck to our none too comfortable jobs, and day by day the War got worse and worse, and every day the human wastage grew greater, and every day the quantity of machinery and the piles of paper that compassed the slaughter mounted higher and higher above the head of Hope.

I forgot D’Archeville, and it must have been nearly eighteen months before I saw him again. Coincidence? Not a bit of it. The offensive from Ypres to the sea, of July, 1917, was so fantastically expensive that everyone was bound to be in it sooner or later. In some Flemish village to which I had gone to enforce some order, obsolete as soon as it was issued, I stopped for an omelette and white wine, and found myself among French Flying Corps officers—“aspiring aviators,” in the perfect fitness of the French language. There, almost unrecognizable, so thin, so morose had he grown, was D’Archeville. His eyes had yellowed and dwindled. Gone was his azure and strawberry uniform, gone his egregious friendliness. He was making no liaison now, with English or any other men. I have often thought I could tell those who knew that they were going to be killed, and I was sure that he knew. I doubt if he would have come across to my table had I not gone to him, so unimportant had I or any other living creature become. I offered him my flask, for he was drinking hot wine and water, but he refused it, saying something indistinctly about “sacrée

colique." He only added in response to my clumsy attempts at cheerfulness a muttered "sacrée guerre, sacrée vie," and left with his comrades. I never saw him again. Is that true? No, I see him now, I shall see him always, I am trying to see him clearer and clearer, but however clear, alas! he is but a portrait, life-like, I hope, but flat upon the canvas, grayed with memory. Someone told me he was killed, but I knew it. And now, haunted by his eyes, before I can hold out my hand in greeting, I must raise it in salute. I am English, he was French. He *meant* his war.

DEFEAT

FROM

"TATTERDEMALION" BY JOHN GALSWORTHY

She had been standing there on the pavement a quarter of an hour or so after her shilling's worth of concert. Women of her profession are not supposed to have redeeming points, especially when—like May Belinski, as she now preferred to dub herself—they are German; but this woman certainly had music in her soul. She often gave herself these "music baths" when the Promenade Concerts were on, and had just spent half her total wealth in listening to some Mozart and a Beethoven symphony.

She was feeling almost elated, full of divine sound, and of the wonderful summer moonlight which was filling the whole dark town. Women "of a certain type" have, at all events, emotions—and what a comfort that is, even to themselves! To stand just there had become rather a habit of hers. One could seem to be waiting for somebody coming out of the concert, not yet over—which, of course, was precisely what she *was* doing. One need not forever be stealthily glancing and perpetually moving on in that peculiar way, which, while it satisfied the police and Mrs. Grundy, must not quite deceive others as to her business in life. She had only "been at it" long enough to have acquired a nervous dread of almost everything—not long enough to have passed through that dread to callousness. Some women take so much longer than others. And even for a woman "of a certain type" her position was exceptionally nerve-racking in war-time, going as she did by a false name. Indeed, in all England there could hardly be a greater pariah than was this German woman of the night.

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She idled outside a book-shop humming a little, pretending to read the titles of the books by moonlight, taking off and putting on one of her stained yellow gloves. Now and again she would move up as far as the posters outside the Hall, scrutinizing them as if interested in the future, then stroll back again. In her worn and discreet dark dress, and her small hat, she had nothing about her to rouse suspicion, unless it were the trail of violet powder she left on the moonlight.

For the moonlight this evening was almost solid, seeming with its cool still vibration to replace the very air; in it the war-time precautions against light seemed fantastic, like shading candles in a room still full of daylight. What lights there were had the effect of strokes and stipples of dim color laid by a painter's brush on a background of ghostly whitish blue. The dreamlike quality of the town was perhaps enhanced for her eyes by the veil she was wearing—in daytime no longer white. As the music died out of her, elation also ebbed. Somebody had passed her, speaking German, and she was overwhelmed by a rush of nostalgia. On this moonlight night by the banks of the Rhine—whence she came—the orchards would be heavy with apples; there would be murmurs, and sweet scents; the old castle would stand out clear, high over the woods and the chalky-white river. There would be singing far away, and the churning of a distant steamer's screw; and perhaps on the water a log raft still drifting down in the blue light. There would be German voices talking. And suddenly tears oozed up in her eyes, and crept down through the powder on her cheeks. She raised her veil and dabbed at her face with a little, not-too-clean handkerchief, screwed up in her yellow-gloved hand. But the more she dabbed, the more those treacherous tears ran. Then she became aware that a tall young man in khaki was also standing before the shop-window, not looking at the titles of the books, but eyeing her askance. His face was fresh and open, with a sort of kindly eagerness in his blue eyes. Mechanically she drooped her wet lashes, raised them obliquely, drooped them again, and uttered a little sob. . . .

This young man, Captain in a certain regiment, and discharged from hospital at six o'clock that evening, had entered Queen's Hall at half-past seven. Still rather brittle and sore from his wound, he had treated himself to a seat in the Grand Circle, and there had sat, very still and dreamy, the whole concert through. It had been like eating after a long fast—something of the sensation Polar explorers must experience when they return to their first full meal. For he was of the New Army, and before the war had actually believed in music, art, and all that sort of thing. With a month's leave before him, he could afford to feel that life was extraordinarily joyful, his own experiences particularly wonderful; and, coming out into the moonlight, he had taken what can only be described as a great gulp of it, for he was a young man with a sense of beauty. When one has been long in the trenches, lain out wounded in a shell-hole twenty-four hours, and spent three months in hospital, beauty has such an edge of novelty, such a sharp sweetness, that it almost gives pain. And London at night is very beautiful. He strolled slowly towards the Circus, still drawing the moonlight deep into his lungs, his cap tilted up a little on his forehead in that moment of unmilitary abandonment; and whether he stopped before the book-shop window because the girl's figure was in some sort a part of beauty, or because he saw that she was crying, he could not have made clear to anyone.

Then something—perhaps the scent of powder, perhaps the yellow glove, or the oblique flutter of the eyelids—told him that he was making what he would have called "a blooming error," unless he wished for company, which had not been in his thoughts. But her sob affected him, and he said:

"What's the matter?"

Again her eyelids fluttered sideways, and she stammered: "Not'ing. The beautiful evening—that's why!"

That a woman of what he now clearly saw to be "a certain type" should perceive what he himself had just been perceiving, struck him forcibly, and he said:

"Cheer up."

She looked up again swiftly: "Cheer up! You are not lonelee like me."

For one of that sort, she looked somehow honest; her tear-streaked face was rather pretty, and he murmured:

"Well, let's walk a bit, and talk it over."

They turned the corner, and walked east, along streets empty, and beautiful, with their dulled orange-glowing lamps, and here and there the glint of some blue or violet light. He found it queer and rather exciting—for an adventure of just this kind he had never had. And he said doubtfully:

"How did you get into this? Isn't it an awfully hopeless sort of life?"

"Ye-es, it ess ——" her voice had a queer soft emphasis. "You are limping—haf you been wounded?"

"Just out of the hospital today."

"The horrible war—all the misery is because of the war. When will it end?"

He looked at her attentively, and said:

"I say—what nationality are you?"

"Rooshian."

"Really! I never met a Russian girl."

He was conscious that she looked at him, then very quickly down. And he said suddenly:

"Is it as bad as they make out?"

She slipped her yellow-gloved hand through his arm.

"Not when I haf anyone as nice as you; I never haf yet, though"; she smiled—and her smile was like her speech, slow, confiding—"you stopped because I was sad, others stop because I am gay. I am not fond of men at all. When you know, you are not fond of them."

"Well! You hardly know them at their best, do you? You should see them at the front. By George! they're simply splendid—officers and men, every blessed soul. There's never been anything like it—just one long bit of jolly fine self-sacrifice; it's perfectly amazing."

Turning her blue-gray eyes on him, she answered:

"I expect you are not the last at that. You see in them what you haf in yourself, I think."

"Oh! not a bit—you're quite out. I assure you when we made the attack where I got wounded, there wasn't a single man in my regiment who wasn't an absolute hero. The way they went in—never thinking of themselves—it was simply superb!"

Her teeth came down on her lower lip, and she answered in a queer voice: "It is the same too perhaps with—the enemy."

"Oh yes, I know that."

"Ah! You are not a mean man. How I hate mean men!"

"Oh, they're not mean really—they simply don't understand."

"Oh! you are a baby—a good baby, aren't you?"

He did not quite like being called a baby, and frowned; but was at once touched by the disconcertion in her powdered face. How quickly she was scared!

She said clingingly:

"But I li-like you for it. It is so good to find a ni-ice man."

This was worse, and he said abruptly:

"About being lonely? Haven't you any Russian friends?"

"Rooshian! No!" Then quickly added: "The town is so beeg! Haf you been in the concert?"

"Yes."

"I, too—I love music."

"I suppose all Russians do."

She looked up at his face again, and seemed to struggle to keep silent; then she said quietly:

"I go there always when I haf the money."

"What! Are you so on the rocks?"

"Well, I haf just one shilling now." And she laughed.

The sound of that little laugh upset him—she had a way of making him feel sorry for her every time she spoke.

They had come by now to a narrow square, east of Gower Street.

"This is where I lif," she said. "Come in!"

He had one long moment of violent hesitation, then yielded to the soft tugging of her hand, and followed. The passage-hall was dimly lighted, and they went upstairs into a front room, where the curtains were drawn, and the gas turned very low. Opposite the window were other curtains dividing off the rest of the apartment. As soon as the door was shut she put up her face and kissed him—evidently formula! What a room! Its green and beetroot colouring and the prevalence of cheap plush disagreeably affected him. Everything in it had that callous look of rooms which seem to be saying to their occupants: "You're here today and you'll be gone tomorrow." Everything except one little plant, in a common pot, of maidenhair fern, fresh and green, looking as if it had been watered within the hour; in this room it had just the same unexpected touchiness that peeped out of the girl's matter-of-fact cynicism.

Taking off her hat, she went towards the gas, but he said quickly:

"No, don't turn it up; let's have the window open, and the moonlight in." He had a sudden dread of seeing anything plainly—it was stuffy, too, and pulling the curtains apart, he threw up the window. The girl had come obediently from the hearth, and sat down opposite him, leaning her arm on the window-sill and her chin on her hand. The moonlight caught her cheek where she had just renewed the powder, caught her fair crinkly hair; it caught the plush of the furniture, and his own khaki, giving them all a touch of unreality.

"What's your name?" he said.

"May. Well, I call myself that. It's no good askin' yours."

"You're a distrustful little party, aren't you?"

"I haf reason to be, don't you think?"

"Yes, I suppose you're bound to think us all brutes?"

"Well, I haf a lot of reasons to be afraid all my time. I am dreadfully nervous now; I am not trusting anybody. I suppose you haf been killing lots of Germans?"

He laughed.

"We never know, unless it happens to be hand to hand; I haven't come in for that yet."

"But you would be very glad if you had killed some?"

"Glad? I don't think so. We're all in the same boat, so far as that's concerned. We're not glad to kill each other. We do our job—that's all."

"Oh! it is frightful. I expect I haf my broders killed."

"Don't you get any news ever?"

"News! No indeed, no news of anybody in my country. I might not haf a country; all that I ever knew is gone—fader, moder, sisters, broders, all—never any more I shall see them, I suppose, now. The war it breaks and breaks, it breaks hearts." Her little teeth fastened again on her lower lip in that sort of pretty snarl. "Do you know what I was thinkin' when you came up? I was thinkin' of my native town, and the river there in the moonlight. If I could see it again, I would be glad. Were you ever homeseeck?"

"Yes, I have been—in the trenches; but one's ashamed, with all the others."

"Ah! ye-es!" It came from her with a hiss. "Ye-es! You are all comrades there. What is it like for me here, do you think, where everybody hates and despises me, and would catch me, and put me in prison, perhaps?"

He could see her breast heaving with a quick breathing painful to listen to. He leaned forward, patting her knee, and murmuring: "Sorry—sorry."

She said in a smothered voice:

"You are the first who has been kind to me for so long! I will tell you the truth—I am not Rooshian at all—I am German."

Hearing that half-choked confession, his thought was: "Does she really think we fight against women?" And he said:

"My dear girl, who cares?"

Her eyes seemed to search right into him. She said slowly:

"Another man said that to me. But he was thinkin' of other things. You are a verree ni-ice boy. I am so glad I met you. You

see the good in people, don't you? That is the first thing in the world—because there is really not much good in people, you know."

He said, smiling:

"You're a dreadful little cynic!" Then thought: "Of course she is—poor thing!"

"Cyneec? How long do you think I would live if I was not a cyneec? I should drown myself tomorrow. Perhaps there are good people, but, you see, I don't know them."

"I know lots."

She leaned forward eagerly.

"Well now—see, ni-ice boy—you haf never been in a hole, haf you?"

"I suppose not a real hole."

"No, I should think not, with your face. Well, suppose I am still a good girl, as I was once, you know, and you took me to some of your good people, and said: 'Here is a little German girl that has no work, and no money, and no friends.' Your good people they will say: 'Oh! how sad! A German girl!' and they will go and wash their hands."

Silence fell on him. He saw his mother, his sisters, others—good people, he would swear! And yet ——! He heard their voices, frank and clear; and they seemed to be talking of the Germans. If only she were not German!

"You see!" he heard her say, and could only mutter:

"I'm sure there *are* people."

"No. They would not take a German, even if she was good. Besides, I don't want to be good any more—I am not a humbug—I have learned to be bad. Aren't you going to kees me, ni-ice boy?"

She put her face close to his. Her eyes troubled him, but he drew back. He thought she would be offended or persistent, but she was neither; just looked at him fixedly with a curious inquiring stare; and he leaned against the window, deeply disturbed. It was as if all clear and simple enthusiasm had been suddenly knocked endways; as if a certain splendor of life

that he had felt and seen of late had been dipped in cloud. Out there at the front, over here in hospital, life had been seeming so—as it were—heroic; and yet it held such mean and murky depths as well! The voices of his men, whom he had come to love like brothers, crude burring voices, cheery in trouble, making nothing of it; the voices of doctors and nurses, patient, quiet, reassuring voices; even his own voice, infected by it all, kept sounding in his ears. All wonderful somehow, and simple; and nothing mean about it anywhere! And now so suddenly to have lighted upon this, and all that was behind it—this scared girl, this base, dark, thoughtless use of her! And the thought came to him: “I suppose my fellows wouldn’t think twice about taking her on! Why! I’m not even certain of myself, if she insists!” And he turned his face, and stared out at the moonlight. He heard her voice:

“Eesn’t it light? No air raid tonight. When the Zepps burned—what a horrible death! And all the people cheered—it is natural. Do you hate us verree much?”

He turned round and said sharply:

“Hate? I don’t know.”

“I don’t hate even the English—I despise them. I despise my people too—perhaps more, because they began this war. Oh, yes! I know that. I despise all the peoples. Why haf they made the world so miserable—why haf they killed all our lives—hundreds and thousands and millions of lives—all for not’ing? They haf made a bad world—everybody hating, and looking for the worst everywhere. They haf made me bad, I know. I believe no more in anything. What is there to believe in? Is there a God? No! Once I was teaching little English children their prayers—isn’t that funnee? I was reading to them about Christ and love. I believed all those things. Now I believe not’ing at all—no one who is not a fool or a liar can believe. I would like to work in a hospital! I would like to go and help poor boys like you. Because I am a German they would throw me out a hundred times, even if I was good. It is the same in Germany and France and Russia, everywhere. But

do you think I will believe in love and Christ and a God and all that?—not I! I think we are animals—that's all! Oh! yes—you fancy it is because my life has spoiled me. It is not that at all—that's not the worst thing in life. Those men are not ni-ice, like you, but it's their nature, and," she laughed, "they help me to live, which is something for me anyway. No, it is the men who think themselves great and good, and make the war with their talk and their hate, killing us all—killing all the boys like you, and keeping poor people in prison, and telling us to go on hating; and all those dreadful cold-blooded creatures who write in the papers—the same in my country, just the same; it is because of all them that I think we are only animals."

He got up, acutely miserable. He could see her following him with her eyes, and knew she was afraid she had driven him away. She said coaxingly: "Don't mind me talking, ni-ice boy. I don't know anyone to talk to. If you don't like it, I can be quiet as a mouse."

He muttered:

"Oh! go on, talk away. I'm not obliged to believe you, and I don't."

She was on her feet now, leaning against the wall; her dark dress and white face just touched by the slanting moonlight; and her voice came again, slow and soft and bitter:

"Well, look here, ni-ice boy, what sort of a world is it, where millions are being tortured—horribly tortured, for no fault of theirs, at all? A beautiful world, isn't it! 'Umbug! Silly rot, as you boys call it. You say it is all 'Comrade'! and braveness out there at the front, and people don't think of themselves. Well, I don't think of myself verree much. What does it matter—I am lost now, anyway; but I think of my people at home, how they suffer and grieve. I think of all the poor people there and here who lose those they love, and all the poor prisoners. Am I not to think of them? And if I do, how am I to believe it a beautiful world, ni-ice boy?"

He stood very still, biting his lips.

"Look here! We haf one life each, and soon it is over. Well, I think that is lucky."

He said resentfully:

"No! there's more than that."

"Ah!" she went on softly; "you think the war is fought for the future; you are giving your lives for a better world, aren't you?"

"We must fight till we win," he said between his teeth.

"Till you win. My people think that, too. All the peoples think that if they win the world will be better. But it will not, you know, it will be much worse, anyway."

He turned away from her and caught up his cap; but her voice followed him.

"I don't care which win, I despise them all—animals—animals—animals! Ah! Don't go, ni-ice boy—I will be quiet now."

He took some notes from his tunic pocket, put them on the table, and went up to her.

"Good-night."

She said plaintively:

"Are you really going? Don't you like me, enough?"

"Yes, I like you."

"Is it because I am German, then?"

"No."

"Then why won't you stay?"

He wanted to answer: "Because you upset me so"; but he just shrugged his shoulders.

"Won't you kees me once?"

He bent, and put his lips to her forehead; but as he took them away she threw her head back, pressed her mouth to his, and clung to him.

He sat down suddenly and said:

"Don't! I don't want to feel a brute."

She laughed. "You are a funny boy, but you are verree good. Talk to me a little, then. No one talks to me. I would much rather talk, anyway. Tell me, haf you seen many German prisoners?"

He sighed—from relief, or was it from regret?

"A good many."

"Any from the Rhine?"

"Yes, I think so."

"Were they very sad?"

"Some were—some were quite glad to be taken."

"Did you ever see the Rhine? Isn't it beautiful? It will be wonderful tonight. The moonlight will be the same here as there; in Rooshia too, and France, everywhere; and the trees will look the same as here, and people will meet under them and make love just as here. Oh! isn't it stupid, the war?—as if it was not good to be alive."

He wanted to say: "You can't tell how good it is to be alive, till you're facing death, because you don't live till then. And when a whole lot of you feel like that—and are ready to give their lives for each other, it's worth all the rest of life put together." But he couldn't get it out to this girl who believed in nothing.

"How were you wounded, ni-ice boy?"

"Attacking across open ground—four machine-gun bullets got me at one go off."

"Weren't you verree frightened when they ordered you to attack?" No, he had not been frightened just then! And he shook his head and laughed.

"It was great. We did laugh that morning. They got me much too soon, though—a swindle!"

She stared at him.

"You laughed?"

"Yes, and what do you think was the first thing I was conscious of next morning—my old Colonel bending over me and giving me a squeeze of lemon. If you knew my Colonel you'd still believe in things. There *is* something, you know, behind all this evil. After all, you can only die once, and if it's for your country all the better."

Her face, with intent eyes just touched with bistre, had in

the moonlight a most strange, other-world look. Her lips moved:

"No, I believe in nothing. My heart is dead."

"You think so, but it isn't, you know, or you wouldn't have been crying, when I met you."

"If it were not dead, do you think I could live my life—walking the streets every night, pretending to like strange men—never hearing a kind word—never talking, for fear I will be known for a German. Soon I shall take to drinking, then I shall be 'Kaput' very quick. You see, I am practical, I see things clear. Tonight I am a little emotional; the moon is funny, you know. But I live for myself only, now. I don't care for anything or anybody."

"All the same, just now you were pitying your people, and prisoners, and that."

"Yes, because they suffer. Those who suffer are like me—I pity myself, that's all; I am different from your English-women. I see what I am doing; I do not let my mind become a turnip just because I am no longer moral."

"Nor your heart either."

"Ni-ice boy, you are verree obstinate. But all that about love is 'umbug. We love ourselves, nothing more."

Again, at that intense soft bitterness in her voice, he felt stifled, and got up, leaning in the window. The air out there was free from the smell of dust and stale perfume. He felt her fingers slip between his own, and stay unmoving. Since she was so hard, and cynical, why should he pity her? Yet he did. The touch of that hand within his own roused his protective instinct. She had poured out her heart to him—a perfect stranger! He pressed it a little, and felt her fingers crisp in answer. Poor girl! This was perhaps a friendlier moment than she had known for years! And after all, fellow-feeling was bigger than principalities and powers! Fellow-feeling was all-pervading as this moonlight, which she had said would be the same in Germany—as this white ghostly glamour that wrapped the trees, making the orange lamps so quaint and decoratively useless

out in the narrow square, where emptiness and silence reigned. He looked around into her face—in spite of bistre and powder, and the faint rouging on her lips, it had a queer, unholy, touching beauty. And he had suddenly the strangest feeling, as if they stood there—the two of them—proving that kindness and human fellowship were stronger than lust, stronger than hate; proving it against meanness and brutality, and the sudden shouting of newspaper boys in some neighboring street. Their cries, passionately vehement, clashed into each other, and obscured the words—what was it they were calling? His head went up to listen; he felt her hand rigid within his arm—she too was listening. The cries came nearer, hoarser, more shrill and clamorous; the empty moonlight seemed of a sudden crowded with footsteps, voices, and a fierce distant cheering. "Great victory—great victory! Official! British! Defeat of the 'Uns! Many thousand prisoners!" So it sped by, intoxicating, filling him with a fearful joy; and leaning far out, he waved his cap and cheered like a madman; and the whole night seemed to him to flutter and vibrate, and answer. Then he turned to rush down into the street, struck against something soft, and recoiled. The girl! She stood with hands clenched, her face convulsed, panting, and even in the madness of his joy he felt for her. To hear this—in the midst of enemies! All confused with the desire to do something, he stooped to take her hand; and the dusty reek of the table-cloth clung to his nostrils. She snatched away her fingers, swept up the notes he had put down, and held them out to him.

"Take them—I will not haf your English money—take them." And suddenly she tore them across twice, three times, let the bits flutter to the floor, and turned her back to him. He stood looking at her leaning against the plush-covered table which smelled of dust; her head down, a dark figure in a dark room with the moonlight sharpening her outline—hardly a moment he stayed, then made for the door. . . .

When he was gone she still stood there, her chin on her breast—she who cared for nothing, believed in nothing—with

the sound in her ears of cheering, of hurrying feet, and voices; stood, in the centre of a pattern made by fragments of the torn-up notes, staring out into the moonlight, seeing, not this hated room and the hated square outside, but a German orchard, and herself, a little girl, plucking apples, a big dog beside her; a hundred other pictures, too, such as the drowning see. Her heart swelled; she sank down on the floor, laid her forehead on the dusty carpet, and pressed her body to it.

She who did not care—who despised all peoples, even her own—began, mechanically, to sweep together the scattered fragments of the notes, assembling them with the dust into a little pile, as of fallen leaves, and dabbling in it with her fingers, while the tears ran down her cheeks. For her country she had torn them, her country in defeat! She, who had just one shilling in this great town of enemies, who wrung her stealthy living out of the embraces of her foes! And suddenly in the moonlight she sat up and began to sing with all her might—“*Die Wacht am Rhein.*”

THE CLYDE

FROM

"THE PRETTY LADY" BY ARNOLD BENNETT

She was sitting up on the chaise-longue and had poured out the tea—he had pushed the tea-table towards the chaise-longue—and she was talking in an ordinary tone just as though she had not immodestly bared her spirit to him and as though she knew not that he realized she had done so. She was talking at length, as one who in the past had been well accustomed to giving monologues and to holding drawing-rooms in subjection while she chattered, and to making drawing-rooms feel glad that they had consented to subjection. She was saying:

"You've no idea what the valley of the Clyde is now. You can't have. It's filled with girls, and they come into it every morning by train to huge stations specially built for them, and they make the most ghastly things for killing other girls' lovers all day, and they go back by train at night. Only some of them work all night. I had to leave my own works to organize the canteen of a new filling factory. Five thousand girls in that factory. It's frightfully dangerous. They have to wear special clothing. They have to take off every stitch from their bodies in one room, and run in their innocence and nothing else to another room where the special clothing is. That's the only way to prevent the whole place being blown up one beautiful day. But five thousand of them! You can't imagine it. You'd like to, G. J., but you can't. However, I didn't stay there very long. I wanted to go back to my own place. I was adored at my own place. Of course the men adored me. They used to fight about me sometimes. Terrific men. Nothing ever made me happier than that, or so happy. But the girls were more inter-

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esting. Two thousand of them there. You'd never guess it, because they were hidden in thickets of machinery. But see them rush out endlessly to the canteen for tea! All sorts. Lots of devils and cats. Some lovely creatures, heavenly creatures, as fine as a queen. They adored me too. They didn't at first, some of them. But they soon tumbled to it that I was the modern woman, and that they'd never seen me before, and it was a great discovery. Absurdly easy to raise yourself to be the idol of a crowd that fancies itself canny! Incredibly easy! I used to take their part against the works-manager as often as I could; he was a fiend; he hated me; but then I was a fiend, too, and I hated him more. I used often to come on at six in the morning, when they did, and 'sign on.' It isn't really signing on now at all; there's a clock dial and a whole machine for catching you out. They loved to see me doing that. And I worked the lathes sometimes, just for a bit, just to show that I wasn't ashamed to work. Etc. . . . All that sentimental twaddle. It pleased them. And if any really vigorous-minded girl had dared to say it was sentimental twaddle, there would have been a crucifixion or something of the sort in the cloak-rooms. The mob's always the same. But what pleased them far more than anything was me knowing them by their Christian names. Not all, of course; still, hundreds of them. Marvellous feats of memorizing I did! I used to go about muttering under my breath: 'Winnie, wart on left hand, Winnie, wart on left hand, wart on left hand, Winnie.' You see, and I've sworn at them—not often; it wouldn't do, naturally. But there was scarcely a woman there that I couldn't simply blast in two seconds if I felt like it. On the other hand, I assure you I could be very tender. I was surprised how tender I could be, now and then, in my little office. They'd tell me anything—sounds sentimental, but they would—and some of them had no more notion that there's such a thing on earth as propriety than a monkey has. I thought I knew everything before I went to the Clyde valley. Well, I didn't." Concepcion looked at G. J. "You know you're very innocent, G. J., compared to me."

"I should hope so!" said G. J., impenetrably.

"What do you think of it all?" she demanded in a fresh tone, leaning a little towards him.

He replied:

"I'm impressed. . . ." She amazed him, sitting there in the purple stockings and the affronting gown, and he admired. Her material achievement alone was prodigious. He pictured her as she rose in the winter dark and in the summer dawn to go to the works and wrestle with so much incalculable human nature and so many complex questions of organization, day after day, week after week, month after month, for nearly eighteen months. She had kept it up; that was the point. She had shown what she was made of, and what she was made of was unquestionably marvellous.

He would have liked to know about various things to which she had made no reference. Did she live in a frowsy lodging-house near the great works? What kind of food did she get? What did she do with her evenings and her Sundays? Was she bored? Was she miserable or exultant? Had she acquaintances, external interests; or did she immerse herself completely, inclusively, in the huge, smoking, whirring, foul, perilous hell which she had described? The contemplation of the horror of the hell gave him—and her, too, he thought—a curious feeling which was not unpleasurable. It had savour. He would not, however, inquire from her concerning details. He preferred, on reflection, to keep the details mysterious, as mysterious as her individuality and as the impression of her worn eyes. The setting of mystery in his mind suited her.

He said:

"But of course your relations with those girls were artificial, after all."

"No, they weren't. I tell you the girls were perfectly open; there wasn't the slightest artificiality."

"Yes, but were you open, to them? Did you ever tell them anything about yourself, for instance?"

"Oh, no!"

"Did they ever ask you to?"

"No! They wouldn't have thought of doing so."

"That's what I call artificiality. By the way, how have you been ruined? Who ruined you? Was it the hated works-manager?" There had been no change in his tone; he spoke with the utmost detachment.

"I was coming to that," answered Concepcion, apparently with a detachment equal to his. "Last week but one in one of the shops there was a girl standing in front of a machine, with her back to it. About 22—you must see her in your mind—about 22, nice chestnut hair. Cap over it, of course—that's the rule. Khaki overalls and trousers. Rather high-heeled patent-leather boots—they fancy themselves, thank God!—and a bit of lace showing out of the khaki at the neck. Red cheeks; she was fairly new to the works. Do you see her? She meant to be one of the devils. Earning two pounds a week nearly, and eagerly spending it all. Fully awake to all the possibilities of her body. I was in the shop. I said something to her, and she didn't hear at first—the noise of some of the shops is shattering. I went close to her and repeated it. She laughed out of mere vivacity, and threw back her head as people do when they laugh. The machine behind her must have caught some hair that wasn't under her cap. All her hair was dragged from under the cap, and in no time all her hair was torn out and the whole of her scalp ripped clean off. In a second or two I got her on to a trolley—I did it—and threw an overall over her and ran her to the dressing-station, close to the main office entrance. There was a car there. One of the directors was just driving off. I stopped him. It wasn't a case for our dressing-station. In three minutes I had her at the hospital—three minutes. The car was soaked in blood. But she didn't lose consciousness; that child didn't. She's dead now. She's buried. Her body that she meant to use so profusely for her own delights is squeezed up in the little black box in the dark and the silence, down below where the spring can't get at it. . . . I had no sleep for two nights. On the second day a doctor at the hospital said that I must

take at least three months' holiday. He said I'd had a nervous breakdown. I didn't know I had, and I don't know now. I said I wouldn't take any holiday, and that nothing would induce me to."

"Why, Con?"

"Because I'd sworn, absolutely sworn to myself, to stick that job till the war was over. You understand, I'd sworn it. Well, they wouldn't let me on to the works. And yesterday one of the directors brought me up to town himself. He was very kind, in his Clyde way. Now you understand what I mean when I say I'm ruined. I'm ruined with myself, you see. I didn't stick it. I couldn't. But there were twenty or thirty girls who saw the accident. They're sticking it."

"Yes," he said in a voice soft and moved, "I understand." And while he spoke thus aloud, though his emotion was genuine, and his desire to comfort and sustain her genuine, and his admiration for her genuine, he thought to himself: "How theatrically she told it! Every effect was studied, nearly every word. Well, she can't help it. But does she imagine I can't see that all the casualness was deliberately part of the effect? . . ."

She lit a cigarette and leaned her half-draped elbows on the tea-table, and curved her ringed fingers, which had withstood time and fatigue much better than her face; and then she reclined again on the chaise-longue, on her back, and sent up smoke perpendicularly, and through the smoke seemed to be trying to decipher the enigmas of the ceiling. G. J. rose and stood over her in silence. . . .

NO MORE PARADES

FROM

"NO MORE PARADES" BY FORD MADDOX FORD

When you came in the space was desultory, rectangular, warm after the drip of the winter night, and transfused with a brown-orange dust that was light. It was shaped like the house a child draws. Three groups of brown limbs spotted with brass took dim high-lights from shafts that came from a bucket pierced with holes, filled with incandescent coke and covered in with a sheet of iron in the shape of a tunnel. Two men, as if hierarchically smaller, crouched on the floor beside the brazier; four, two at each end of the hut, drooped over tables in attitudes of extreme indifference. From the eaves above the parallelogram of black that was the doorway fell intermittent drippings of collected moisture, persistent, with glass-like intervals of musical sound. The two men squatting on their heels over the brazier—they had been miners—began to talk in a low sing-song of dialect, hardly audible. It went on and on, monotonously, without animation. It was as if one told the other long, long stories to which his companion manifested his comprehension or sympathy with animal grunts. . . .

An immense tea-tray, august, its voice filling the black circle of the horizon, thundered to the ground. Numerous pieces of sheet-iron said, "Pack. Pack. Pack." In a minute the clay floor of the hut shook, the drums of ears were pressed inwards, solid noise showered about the universe, enormous echoes pushed these men—to the right, to the left, or down towards the tables, and crackling like that of flames among vast under-wood became the settled condition of the night. Catching the

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light from the brazier as the head leaned over, the lips of one of the two men on the floor were incredibly red and full and went on talking and talking. . . .

The two men on the floor were Welsh miners, of whom the one came from the Rhondda Valley and was unmarried; the other, from Pontardulais, had a wife who kept a laundry, he having given up going underground just before the war. The two men at the table to the right of the door were sergeants-major; the one came from Suffolk and was a time-serving man of sixteen years' seniority as a sergeant in a line regiment. The other was Canadian of English origin. The two officers at the other end of the hut were captains, the one a young regular officer born in Scotland but educated at Oxford; the other, nearly middle-aged and heavy, came from Yorkshire, and was in a militia battalion. The one runner on the floor was filled with a passionate rage because the elder officer had refused him leave to go home and see why his wife, who had sold their laundry, had not yet received the purchase money from the buyer; the other was thinking about a cow. His girl, who worked on a mountainy farm above Caerphilly, had written to him about a queer cow: a black-and-white Holstein—surely to goodness a queer cow. The English sergeant-major was almost tearfully worried about the enforced lateness of the draft. It would be twelve midnight before they could march them off. It was not right to keep men hanging about like that. The men did not like to be kept waiting, hanging about. It made them discontented. They did not like it. He could not see why the depot quartermaster could not keep up his stock of candles for the hooded lamps. The men had no call to be kept waiting, hanging about. Soon they would have to be having some supper. Quarter would not like that. He would grumble fair. Having to indent for suppers. Put his accounts out, fair, it would. Two thousand nine hundred and thirty-four suppers at a penny half-penny. But it was not right to keep the men hanging about till midnight and no suppers. It made them discontented and them going up the line for the first time, poor devils.

The Canadian sergeant-major was worried about a pig-skin leather pocket-book. He had bought it at the ordnance depot in the town. He imagined himself bringing it out on parade, to read out some return or other to the adjutant. Very smart it would look on parade, himself standing up straight and tall. But he could not remember whether he had put it in his kit-bag. On himself it was not. He felt in his right and left breast pockets, his right and left shirt pockets, in all the pockets of his overcoat that hung from a nail within reach of his chair. He did not feel at all certain that the man who acted as his batman had packed that pocket-book with his kit, though he declared he had. It was very annoying. His present wallet, bought in Ontario, was bulging and split. He did not like to bring it out when Imperial officers asked for something out of a return. It gave them a false idea of Canadian troops. Very annoying. He was an auctioneer. He agreed that at this rate it would be half-past one before they had the draft down to the station and entrained. But it was very annoying to be uncertain whether that pocket-book was packed or not. He had imagined himself making a good impression on parade, standing up straight and tall, taking out that pocket-book when the adjutant asked for a figure from one return or the other. He understood their adjutants were to be Imperial officers now they were in France. It was very annoying.

An enormous crashing sound said things of an intolerable intimacy to each of those men, and to all of them as a body. After its mortal vomiting all the other sounds appeared a rushing silence, painful to ears in which the blood audibly coursed. The young officer stood violently up on his feet and caught at the complications of his belt hung from a nail. The elder, across the table, lounging sideways, stretched out one hand with a downwards movement. He was aware that the younger man, who was the senior officer, was just about out of his mind. The younger man, intolerably fatigued, spoke sharp, injurious, inaudible words to his companion. The elder spoke sharp, short words, inaudible too, and continued to motion

downwards with his hand over the table. The old English sergeant-major said to his junior that Captain Mackenzie had one of his mad fits again, but what he said was inaudible and he knew it. He felt arising in his motherly heart that yearned at the moment over his two thousand nine hundred and thirty-four nurslings a necessity, like a fatigue, to extend the motherliness of his functions to the officer. He said to the Canadian that Captain Mackenzie there going temporary off his nut was the best orfcer in His Majesty's army. And going to make a bleedin' fool of hisself. The best orfcer in His Majesty's army. Not a better. Careful, smart, brave as an 'ero. And considerate of his men in the line. You wouldn't believe. . . . He felt vaguely that it was a fatigue to have to mother an officer. To a lance-corporal, or a young sergeant, beginning to go wrong you could mutter wheezy suggestions through your moustache. But to an officer you had to say things slantways. Difficult it was. Thank God they had a trustworthy, cool hand in the other captain. Old and good, the proverb said.

Dead silence fell.

"Lost the ——, they 'ave," the runner from the Rhondda made his voice startlingly heard. Brilliant illuminations flickered on hut-gables visible through the doorway.

"No reason," his mate from Pontardulais rather whined in his native sing-song, "why the bleedin' searchlights, surely to goodness, should light us up for all the —— 'Un planes to see. I want to see my bleedin' little 'ut on the bleedin' Mumbles again, if they don't."

"Not so much swear words, O Nine Morgan," the sergeant-major said.

"Now, Dai Morgan, I'm telling you," 09 Morgan's mate continued. "A queer cow it must have been whatever. Black-and-white Holstein it wass. . . ."

It was as if the younger captain gave up listening to the conversation. He leant both hands on the blanket that covered the table. He exclaimed:

"Who the hell are you to give me orders? I'm your senior.

Who the hell. . . . Oh, by God, who the hell. . . . Nobody gives me orders. . . ." His voice collapsed weakly in his chest. He felt his nostrils to be inordinately dilated so that the air pouring into them was cold. He felt that there was an entangled conspiracy against him, and all round him. He exclaimed: "You and your—pimp of a general. . . ." He desired to cut certain throats with a sharp trench-knife that he had. That would take the weight off his chest. The "Sit down" of the heavy figure lumping opposite him paralysed his limbs. He felt an unbelievable hatred. If he could move his hand to get at his trench-knife. . . .

09 Morgan said: "The ——'s name who's bought my bleedin' laundry is Williams. . . . If I thought it was Evans Williams of Castell Goch, I'd desert."

"Took a hatred for its cawve," the Rhondda man said. "And look you, before you could say . . ." The conversation of orfcers was a thing to which they neither listened. Officers talked of things that had no interest. Whatever could possess a cow to take a hatred of its calf? Up behind Caerphilly on the mountains? On an autumny morning the whole hillside was covered with spider-webs. They shone down the sun like spun glass. Overlooked the cow must be.

The young captain leaning over the table began a long argument as to relative seniority. He argued with himself, taking both sides in an extraordinarily rapid gabble. He himself had been gazetted after Gheluvelt. The other not till a year later. It was true the other was in permanent command of that depot, and he himself attached to the unit only for rations and discipline. But that did not include orders to sit down. What the hell, he wanted to know, did the other mean by it? He began to talk, faster than ever, about a circle. When its circumference came whole by the disintegration of the atom the world would come to an end. In the millennium there would be no giving or taking orders. Of course he obeyed orders till then.

To the elder officer, burdened with the command of a unit

of unreasonable size, with a scratch headquarters of useless subalterns who were continually being changed, with N.C.O.'s all unwilling to work, with rank and file nearly all colonials and unused to doing without things, and with a depot to draw on that, being old established, felt that it belonged exclusively to a regular British unit and resented his drawing anything at all, the practical difficulties of his everyday life were already sufficient, and he had troublesome private affairs. He was lately out of hospital; the sackcloth hut in which he lived, borrowed from the Depot medical officer who had gone to England on leave, was suffocatingly hot with the paraffin heater going, and intolerably cold and damp without it; the batman whom the M.O. had left in charge of the hut appeared to be half-witted. These German air-raids had lately become continuous. The Base was packed with men, tighter than sardines. Down in the town you could not move in the streets. Draft-finding units were commanded to keep their men out of sight as much as possible. Drafts were to be sent off only at night. But how could you send off a draft at night when every ten minutes you had two hours of lights out for an air-raid? Every man had nine sets of papers and tags that had to be signed by an officer. It was quite proper that the poor devils should be properly documented. But how was it to be done? He had two thousand nine hundred and ninety-four men to send off that night and nine times two thousand nine hundred and ninety-four is twenty-six thousand nine hundred and forty-six. They would not or could not let him have a disc-punching machine of his own, but how was the Depot armourer to be expected to punch five thousand nine hundred and eighty-eight extra identity discs in addition to his regular jobs?

The other captain rambled on in front of him. Tietjens did not like his talk of the circle and the millennium. You get alarmed, if you have any sense, when you hear that. It may prove the beginnings of definite, dangerous lunacy. . . . But he knew nothing about the fellow. He was too dark and good-looking, too passionate, probably, to be a good regular officer

on the face of him. But he *must* be a good officer: he had the D.S.O. with a clasp, the M.C., and some foreign ribbon up. And the general said he was: with the additional odd piece of information that he was a Vice-Chancellor's Latin Prize man. . . . He wondered if General Campion knew what a Vice-Chancellor's Latin Prize man was. Probably he did not, but had just stuck the piece of information into his note as a barbaric ornament is used by a savage chief. Wanted to show that he, General Lord Edward Campion, was a man of culture. There was no knowing where vanity would not break out.

So this fellow was too dark and good-looking to be a good officer: yet he *was* a good officer. That explained it. The repressions of the passionate drive them mad. He must have been being sober, disciplined, patient, absolutely repressed ever since 1914—against a background of hell-fire, row, blood, mud, old tins. . . . And indeed the elder officer had a vision of the younger as if in a design for a full-length portrait—for some reason with his legs astride, against a background of tapestry scarlet with fire and more scarlet with blood. . . . He sighed a little; that was the life of all those several millions. . . .

He seemed to see his draft: two thousand nine hundred and ninety-four men he had had command of for over a couple of months—a long space of time as that life went—men he and Sergeant-Major Cowley had looked after with a great deal of tenderness, superintending their morale, their morals, their feet, their digestions, their impatiences, their desires for women. . . . He seemed to see them winding away over a great stretch of country, the head slowly settling down, as in the Zoo you will see an enormous serpent slowly sliding down into its water-tank. . . . Settling down out there, a long way away, up against that impassable barrier that stretched from the depths of the ground to the peak of heaven. . . .

Intense dejection: endless muddles: endless follies: endless villainies. All these men given into the hands of the most cynically care-free intriguers in long corridors who made plots that

harrowed the hearts of the world. All these men toys: all these agonies mere occasions for picturesque phrases to be put into politician's speeches without heart or even intelligence. Hundreds of thousands of men tossed here and there in that sordid and gigantic mud-brownness of midwinter . . . by God, exactly as if they were nuts wilfully picked up and thrown over the shoulder by magpies. . . . But men. Not just populations. Men you worried over there. Each man a man with a backbone, knees, breeches, braces, a rifle, a home, passions, fornications, drunks, pals, some scheme of the universe, corns, inherited diseases, a greengrocer's business, a milk walk, a paper stall, brats, a slut of a wife. . . . The Men: the Other Ranks! And the poor—little officers. God help them. Vice-Chancellor's Latin Prize men. . . .

This particular poor—Prize man seemed to object to noise. They ought to keep the place quiet for him. . . .

By God, he was perfectly right. That place was meant for the quiet and orderly preparation of meat for the shambles. Drafts! A Base is a place where you meditate: perhaps you should pray: a place where in peace the Tommies should write their last letters home and describe 'ow the guns are 'owling 'orribly.

But to pack a million and a half of men into and round that small town was like baiting a trap for rats with a great chunk of rotten meat. The Hun planes could smell them from a hundred miles away. They could do more harm there than if they bombed a quarter of London to pieces. And the air defences there were a joke: a mad joke. They popped off, thousands of rounds, from any sort of pieces of ordnance, like schoolboys bombarding swimming rats with stones. Obviously your best trained air-defence men would be round your metropolis. But this was no joke for the sufferers.

Heavy depression settled down more heavily upon him. The distrust of the home Cabinet, felt by then by the greater part of that army, became like physical pain. These immense sacrifices, this ocean of mental sufferings, were all undergone

to further the private vanities of men who amidst these hugenesses of landscapes and forces appeared pigmies! It was the worries of all these wet millions in mud-brown that worried him. They could die, they could be massacred, by the quarter million, in shambles. But that they should be massacred without jauntiness, without confidence, with depressed brows: without parade. . . .

He knew really nothing about the officer in front of him. Apparently the fellow had stopped for an answer to some question. What question? Tietjens had no idea. He had not been listening. Heavy silence settled down on the hut. They just waited. The fellow said with an intonation of hatred:

"Well, what about it? That's what I want to know!"

Tietjens went on reflecting. . . . There were a great many kinds of madness. What kind was this? The fellow was not drunk. He talked like a drunkard, but he was not drunk. In ordering him to sit down Tietjens had just chanced it. There are madmen whose momentarily subconscious selves will respond to a military command as if it were magic. Tietjens remembered having barked: "About . . . turn," to a poor little lunatic fellow in some camp at home and the fellow who had been galloping hotfoot past his tent, waving a naked bayonet with his pursuers fifty yards behind, had stopped dead and faced about with a military stamp like a guardsman. He had tried it on this lunatic for want of any better expedient. It had apparently functioned intermittently. He risked saying:

"What about what?"

The man said as if ironically:

"It seems as if I were not worth listening to by your high and mightiness. I said: 'What about my foul squit of an uncle?' Your filthy, best friend."

Tietjens said:

"The general's your uncle? General Campion? What's he done to you?"

The general had sent this fellow down to him with a note asking him, Tietjens, to keep an eye in his unit on a very good

fellow and an admirable officer. The chit was in the general's own writing, and contained the additional information as to Captain Mackenzie's scholastic prowess. . . . It had struck Tietjens as queer that the general should take so much trouble about a casual infantry company commander. How could the fellow have been brought markedly to his notice? Of course, Campion was good-natured, like another man. If a fellow, half dotty, whose record showed that he was a very good man, was brought to his notice Campion would do what he could for him. And Tietjens knew that the general regarded himself Tietjens, as a heavy, bookish fellow, able reliably to look after one of his protégés. . . . Probably Campion imagined that they had no work to do in that unit: they might become an acting lunatic ward. But if Mackenzie was Campion's nephew the thing was explained.

The lunatic exclaimed:

"Campion, *my* uncle? Why he's *yours!*"

Tietjens said:

"Oh, no, he isn't." The general was not even a connection of his, but he did happen to be Tietjen's godfather and his father's oldest friend.

The other fellow answered:

"Then it's damn funny. *Damn* suspicious. . . . Why should he be interested in you if he's not your filthy uncle? You're no soldier. . . . You're no sort of a soldier. . . . A meal sack, that's what you look like. . . ." He paused and then went on very quickly: "They say up at H.Q. that your wife has got hold of the disgusting general. I didn't believe it was true. I didn't believe you were that sort of fellow. I've heard a lot about you!"

Tietjens laughed at this madness. Then, in the dark brownness, an intolerable pang went all through his heavy frame—the intolerable pang of home news to these desperately occupied men, the pain caused by disasters happening in the darkness, an intolerable pang went all through his heavy frame—. . . The extraordinary beauty of the wife from whom he was

separated—for she was extraordinarily beautiful!—might well have caused scandals about her to have penetrated to the general's headquarters, which was a sort of family party! Hitherto there had, by the grace of God, been no scandals. Sylvia Tietjens had been excruciatingly unfaithful, in the most painful manner. He could not be certain that the child he adored was his own. . . . That was not unusual with extraordinarily beautiful—and cruel!—women. But she had been haughtily circumspect.

Nevertheless, three months ago, they had parted. . . . Or he thought they had parted. Almost complete blankness had descended upon his home life. She appeared before him so extraordinarily bright and clear in the brown darkness that he shuddered: very tall, very fair, extraordinarily fit and clean even. Thoroughbred! In a sheath gown of gold tissue, all illuminated, and her mass of hair, like gold tissue too, coiled round and round in plaits over her ears. The features very clean-cut and thinnish; the teeth white and small; the breasts small; the arms thin, long and at attention at her sides. . . . His eyes, when they were tired, had that trick of reproducing images on their retinas with that extreme clearness, images sometimes of things he thought of, sometimes of things merely at the back of the mind. Well, to-night his eyes were very tired! She was looking straight before her, with a little inimical disturbance of the corners of her lips. She had just thought of a way to hurt terribly his silent personality. . . . The semi-clearness became a luminous blue, like a tiny gothic arch, and passed out of his vision to the right. . . .

He knew nothing of where Sylvia was. He had given up looking at the illustrated papers. She had said she was going into a convent at Birkenhead—but twice he had seen photographs of her. The first showed her merely with Lady Fiona Grant, daughter of the Earl and Countess of Ulleswater—and a Lord Swindon, talked of as next minister for International Finance—a new Business Peer . . . All three walking straight into the camera in the courtyard of Lord Swindon's

castle . . . all three smiling! . . . It announced Mrs. Christopher Tietjens as having a husband at the front.

The sting had, however, been in the second picture—in the description of it supplied by the journal! It showed Sylvia standing in front of a bench in the park. On the bench in profile there extended himself in a guffaw of laughter, a young man in a top hat jammed well on to his head, which was thrown back, his prognathous jaw pointing upwards. The description stated that the picture showed Mrs. Christopher Tietjens, whose husband was in hospital at the Front, telling a good story to the son and heir of Lord Brigham! . . . Another of these pestilential, crooked newspaper-owning financial peers. . . .

It had struck him for a painful moment whilst looking at the picture in a dilapidated mess anteroom after he had come out of hospital—that, considering the description, the journal had got its knife into Sylvia. . . . But the illustrated papers do not get their knives into society beauties. They are too precious to the photographers. . . . Then Sylvia must have supplied the information; she desired to cause comment by the contrast of her hilarious companions and the statement that her husband was in hospital at the Front. . . . It had occurred to him that she was on the warpath. But he had put it out of his mind. . . . Nevertheless, brilliant mixture as she was, of the perfectly straight, perfectly fearless, perfectly reckless, of the generous, the kind even—and the atrociously cruel, nothing might suit her better than positively to show contempt—no, not contempt! cynical hatred—for her husband, for the war, for public opinion . . . even for the interest of their child! . . . Yet, it came to him, the image of her that he had just seen had been the image of Sylvia, standing at attention, her mouth working a little, whilst she read out the figures beside the bright filament of mercury in a thermometer. . . . The child had had, with measles, a temperature that, even then, he did not dare think of. And—it was at his sister's in Yorkshire, and the local doctor hadn't cared to take the responsibility—

he could still feel the warmth of the little mummy-like body; he had covered the head and face with a flannel, for he didn't care for the sight, and lowered the warm, terrible, fragile weight into a shining surface of crushed ice in water. . . . She had stood at attention, the corners of her mouth moving a little: the thermometer going down as you watched it. . . . So that she mightn't want, in damaging the father, atrociously to damage the child. . . . For there could not be anything worse for a child than to have a mother known as a whore.

Sergeant-Major Cowley was standing beside the table. He said:

"Wouldn't it be a good thing, sir, to send a runner to the depot sergeant cook and tell him we're going to indent for suppers for the draft? We could send the other with the 128's to Quarter. They're neither wanted here for the moment."

The other captain went on incessantly talking—but about his fabulous uncle, not about Sylvia. It was difficult for Tietjens to get what he wanted said. He wanted the second runner sent to the depot quartermaster with a message to the effect that if G.S. candles for hooded lamps were not provided for the use of his orderly room by return of bearer he, Captain Tietjens, commanding Number XVI Casual Battalion, would bring the whole matter of supplies for his battalion that same night before Base Headquarters. They were all three talking at once: heavy fatalism overwhelmed Tietjens at the thought of the stubbornness showed by the depot quartermaster. The big unit beside his camp was a weary obstinacy of obstruction. You would have thought they would have displayed some eagerness to get his men up into the line. Let alone that the men were urgently needed, the more of his men went the more of *them* stayed behind. Yet they tried to stop his meat, his groceries, his braces, his identification discs, his soldiers' small books. . . . Every imaginable hindrance, and not even self-interested common sense! . . . He managed also to convey to Sergeant-Major Cowley that, as everything seemed to have

quieted down, the Canadian sergeant-major had better go and see if everything was ready for falling his draft in. . . . If things remained quiet for another ten minutes, the "All Clear" might then be expected. . . . He knew that Sergeant-Major Cowley wanted to get the Other Ranks out of the hut with that captain carrying on like that, and he did not see why the old N.C.O. should not have what he wanted.

It was as if a tender and masculine butler withdrew himself. Cowley's grey walrus moustache and scarlet cheeks showed for a moment beside the brazier, whispering at the ears of the runners, a hand kindly on each of their shoulders. The runners went; the Canadian went. Sergeant-Major Cowley, his form blocking the doorway, surveyed the stars. He found it difficult to realize that the same pinpricks of light through black manifold paper as he looked at, looked down also on his villa and his elderly wife at Isleworth beside the Thames above London. He knew it to be the fact, yet it was difficult to realize. He imagined the trams going along the High Street, his missus in one of them with her supper in a string bag on her stout knees. The trams lit up and shining. He imagined her having kippers for supper: ten to one it would be kippers. Her favourites. His daughter was in the W.A.A.C.'s by now. She had been cashier to Parks's, the big butchers in Brentford, and pretty she had used to look in the glass case. Like as if it might have been the British Museum where they had Pharaohs and others in glass cases. . . . There were threshing machines droning away all over the night. He always said they were like threshing machines. . . . Crikey, if only they were! . . . But they might be our own planes, of course. A good welsh rarebit he had had for tea.

In the hut, the light from the brazier having fewer limbs on which to fall, a sort of intimacy seemed to descend, and Tietjens felt himself gain in ability to deal with his mad friend. Captain Mackenzie—Tientjens was not sure that the name was Mackenzie: it had looked something like it in the general's hand—Captain Mackenzie was going on about the wrongs he

had suffered at the hands of some fabulous uncle. Apparently at some important juncture the uncle had refused to acknowledge acquaintanceship with the nephew. From that all the misfortunes of the nephew had arisen. . . . Suddenly Tietjens said:

"Look here, pull yourself together. Are you mad? Stark, staring? . . . Or only just play-acting?"

The man suddenly sank down on to the bully-beef case that served for a chair. He stammered a question as to what—what—what Tietjens meant.

"If you let yourself go," Tietjens said, "you may let yourself go a tidy sight farther than you want to."

"You're not a mad doctor," the other said. "It's no good your trying to come it over me. I know all about you. I've got an uncle who's done the dirty on me—the dirtiest dirty ever was done on a man. If it hadn't been for him I shouldn't be here now."

"You talk as if the fellow had sold you into slavery," Tietjens said.

"He's your closest friend," Mackenzie seemed to advance as a motive for revenge on Tietjens. "He's a friend of the general's, too. Of your wife's as well. He's in with everyone."

A few desultory, pleasurable "pop-op-ops" sounded from far overhead to the left.

"They imagine they've found the Hun again," Tietjens said. "That's all right; you concentrate on your uncle. Only don't exaggerate his importance to the world. I assure you you are mistaken if you call him a friend of mine. I have not got a friend in the world." He added: "Are you going to mind the noise? If it is going to get on your nerves you can walk in a dignified manner to a dugout, now, before it gets bad. . . ." He called out to Cowley to go and tell the Canadian sergeant-major to get his men back into their shelters if they had come out. Until the "All Clear" went.

Captain Mackenzie sat himself gloomily down at table.

"Damn it all," he said, "don't think I'm afraid of a little

shrapnel. I've had two periods solid of fourteen and nine months in the line. I could have got out on to the rotten staff. . . . It's damn it: it's the beastly row. . . . Why isn't one a beastly girl and privileged to shriek? By God, I'll get even with some of them one of these days. . . ."

"Why not shriek?" Tietjens asked. "You can, for me. No one's going to doubt your courage here."

Loud drops of rain spattered down all round the hut; there was a familiar thud on the ground a yard or so away, a sharp tearing sound above, a sharper knock on the table between them. Mackenzie took the shrapnel bullet that had fallen and turned it round and round between finger and thumb.

"You think you caught me on the hop just now," he said injuriously. "You're damn clever."

Two stories down below some one let two hundred-pound dumb-bells drop on the drawing-room carpet; all the windows of the house slammed in a race to get it over; the "pop-op-ops" of the shrapnel went in wafts all over the air. There was again sudden silence that was painful, after you had braced yourself up to bear noise. The runner from the Rhondda came in with a light step bearing two fat candles. He took the hooded lamps from Tietjens and began to press the candles up against the inner springs, snorting sedulously through his nostrils. . . .

"Nearly got me, one of those candlesticks did," he said. "Touched my foot as it fell, it did. I did run. Surely to goodness I did run, cahptn."

Inside the shrapnel shell was an iron bar with a flattened, broad nose. When the shell burst in the air this iron object fell to the ground and, since it came often from a great height, its fall was dangerous. The men called these candlesticks, which they much resembled.

A little ring of light now existed on the puce colour of the blanket-covered table. Tietjens showed, silver-headed, fresh-coloured and bulky; Mackenzie, dark, revengeful eyes above a prognathus jaw. A very thin man; thirtyish.

"You can go into the shelter with the Colonial troops, if

you like," Tietjens said to the runner. The man answered after a pause, being very slow thinking, that he preferred to wait for his mate, 09 Morgan whatever.

"They ought to let my orderly room have tin hats," Tietjens said to Mackenzie. "I'm damned if they didn't take these fellows' tin hats into store again when they attached to me for service, and I'm equally damned if they did not tell me that, if I wanted tin hats for my own headquarters, I had to write to H.Q. Canadians, Aldershot, or some such place in order to get the issue sanctioned."

"Our headquarters are full of Huns doing the Huns' work," Mackenzie said hatefully. "I'd like to get among them one of these days."

Tietjens looked with some attention at that young man with the Rembrandt shadows over his dark face. He said:

"Do you believe that tripe?"

The young man said:

"No . . . I don't know that I do. . . . I don't know what to think. . . . The world's rotten. . . ."

"Oh, the world's pretty rotten, all right," Tietjens answered. And, in his fatigue of mind caused by having to attend to innumerable concrete facts like the providing of households for a thousand men every few days, arranging parade states for an extraordinarily mixed set of troops of all arms with very mixed drills, and fighting the Assistant Provost Marshal to keep his own men out of the clutches of the beastly Garrison Military Police who had got a down on all Canadians, he felt he had not any curiosity at all left. . . . Yet he felt vaguely that, at the back of his mind, there was some reason for trying to cure this young member of the lower middle classes.

He repeated:

"Yes, the world's certainly pretty rotten. But that's not its particular line of rottenness as far as we are concerned. . . . We're tangled up, not because we've got Huns in our orderly rooms, but just because we've got English. That's the bat in

our belfry. . . . That Hun plane is presumably coming back. Half a dozen of them. . . .”

The young man, his mind eased by having got off his chest a confounded lot of semi-nonsensical ravings, considered the return of the Hun planes with gloomy indifference. His problem really was: could he stand the—noise that would probably accompany their return? He had to get really into his head that this was an open space to all intents and purposes. There would not be splinters of stone flying about. He was ready to be hit by iron, steel, lead, copper, or brass shell rims, but not by beastly splinters of stone knocked off house fronts. That consideration had come to him during his beastly, his beastly, his infernal, damnable leave in London, when just such a filthy row had been going on. . . . Divorce leave! . . . Captain McKechnie, second attached ninth Glamorganshires, is granted leave from the 14-11 to the 29-11 for the purpose of obtaining a divorce. . . . The memory seemed to burst inside him with the noise of one of those beastly enormous tin-pot crashes—and it always came when guns made that particular kind of tin-pot crash: the two came together, the internal one and the crash outside. He felt that chimney-pots were going to crash on to his head. You protected yourself by shouting at damned infernal idiots; if you could out-shout the row you were safe. . . . That was not sensible, but you got ease that way! . . .

“In matters of Information they’re not a patch on us.” Tietjens tried the speech on cautiously, and concluded: “We know what the Enemy rulers read in the sealed envelopes beside their breakfast bacon-and-egg plates.”

It had occurred to him that it was a military duty to bother himself about the mental equilibrium of this member of the lower classes. So he talked . . . *any* old talk, wearisomely, to keep his mind employed! Captain Mackenzie was an officer of His Majesty the King: the property, body and soul, of His Majesty and His Majesty’s War Office. It was Tietjens’s duty to preserve this fellow as it was his duty to prevent deteri-

oration in any other piece of the King's property. That was implicit in the oath of allegiance. He went on talking:

The curse of the army, as far as the organization is concerned, was our imbecile national belief that the game is more than the player. That was our ruin, mentally, as a nation. We were taught that cricket is more than clearness of mind, so the blasted quartermaster, O.C. Depot Ordnance Stores next door, thought he had taken a wicket if he refused to serve out tin hats to their crowd. That's the Game! And if any of his, Tietjens's, men were killed, he grinned and said the game was more than the players of the game. . . . And of course if he got his bowling average down low enough he got promotion. There was a quartermaster in a west country cathedral city who'd got more D.S.O.'s and combatant medals than anyone on active service in France, from the sea to Peronne, or wherever our lines ended. His achievement was to have robbed almost every wretched Tommie in the Western Command of several weeks' separation allowance . . . for the good of the taxpayer, of course. The poor Tommies' kids went without proper food and clothing, and the Tommies themselves had been in a state of exasperation and resentment. And nothing in the world was worse for discipline and the army as a fighting machine. But there that quartermaster sat in his office, playing the romantic game over his A.F.B.'s till the broad buff sheets fairly glowed in the light of the incandescent gas. "And," Tietjens concluded, "for every quarter of a million sterling for which he bowls out the wretched fighting men he gets a new clasp on his fourth D.S.O. ribbon. . . . The game, in short, is more than the players of the game."

"Oh, damn it!" Captain Mackenzie said. "That's what's made us what we are, isn't it?"

"It is," Tietjens answered. "It's got us into the hole and it keeps us there."

Mackenzie remained dispiritedly looking down at his fingers.

"You may be wrong or you may be right," he said. "It's

contrary to everything that I ever heard. But I see what you mean."

"At the beginning of the war," Tietjens said, "I had to look in on the War Office, and in a room I found a fellow . . . What do you think he was doing . . . what the hell do you think he was doing? He was devising the ceremonial for the disbanding of a Kitchener battalion. You can't say we were not prepared in one matter at least. . . . Well, the end of the show was to be: the adjutant would stand the battalion at ease: the band would play *Land of Hope and Glory*, and then the adjutant would say: *There will be no more parades*. . . . Don't you see how symbolical it was: the band playing *Land of Hope and Glory*, and then the adjutant saying *There will be no more parades*? . . . For there won't. There won't, there damn well won't. . . . No more Hope, no more Glory, no more parades for you and me any more. Nor for the country. . . . Nor for the world, I dare say . . . None . . . Gone . . . Na poo, finny! No . . . more . . . parades!"

"I dare say you're right," the other said slowly. "But, all the same, what am I doing in this show? I hate soldiering. I hate this whole beastly business. . . ."

"Then why didn't you go on the gaudy Staff?" Tietjens asked. "The gaudy Staff apparently was yearning to have you. I bet God intended you for Intelligence: not for the footslogging department."

The other said wearily:

"I don't know. I was with the battalion. I wanted to stop with the battalion. I was intended for the Foreign Office. My miserable uncle got me hoofed out of that. I was with the battalion. The C.O. wasn't up to much. *Someone* had to stay with the battalion. I was not going to do the dirty on it, taking any soft job. . . ."

"I suppose you speak seven languages and all?" Tietjens asked.

"Five," the other said patiently, "and read two more. And Latin and Greek, of course."

A man, brown, stiff, with a haughty parade step, burst into the light. He said with a high wooden voice:

"'Ere's another bloomin' casualty." In the shadow he appeared to have draped half his face and the right side of his breast with crape. He gave a high, rattling laugh. He bent, as if in a stiff bow, woodenly at his thighs. He pitched, still bent, on to the iron sheet that covered the brazier, rolled off that and lay on his back across the legs of the other runner, who had been crouched beside the brazier. In the bright light it was as if a whole pail of scarlet paint had been dashed across the man's face on the left and his chest. It glistened in the fire-light—just like fresh paint, moving! The runner from the Rhondda, pinned down by the body across his knees, sat with his jaw fallen, resembling one girl that should be combing the hair of another recumbent before her. The red viscousness welled across the floor; you sometimes so see fresh water bubbling up in sand. It astonished Tietjens to see that a human body could be so lavish of blood. He was thinking it was a queer mania that that fellow should have, that his uncle was a friend of his, Tietjens. He had no friend in trade, uncle of a fellow who in ordinary times would probably bring you pairs of boots on approval. . . . He felt as he did when you patch up a horse that has been badly hurt. He remembered a horse from a cut on whose chest the blood had streamed down over the off foreleg like a stocking. A girl had lent him her petticoat to bandage it. Nevertheless his legs moved slowly and heavily across the floor.

The heat from the brazier was overpowering on his bent face. He hoped he would not get his hands all over blood, because blood is very sticky. It makes your fingers stick together impotently. But there might not be any blood in the darkness under the fellow's back where he was putting his hand. There was, however: it was very wet.

The voice of Sergeant-Major Cowley said from outside:

"Bugler, call two sanitary lance-corporals and four men. Two sanitary corporals and four men." A prolonged wailing

with interruptions transfused the night, mournful, resigned, and prolonged.

Tietjens thought that, thank God, someone would come and relieve him of that job. It was a breathless affair holding up the corpse with the fire burning his face. He said to the other runner:

"Get out from under him, damn you! Are you hurt?" Mackenzie could not get at the body from the other side because of the brazier. The runner from under the corpse moved with short sitting shuffles as if he were getting his legs out from under a sofa. He was saying:

"Poor—O Nine Morgan! Surely to goodness I did not recognise the pore —— . . . Surely to goodness I did not recognise the pore ——" Tietjens let the trunk of the body sink slowly to the floor. He was more gentle than if the man had been alive. All hell in the way of noise burst about the world. Tietjens's thoughts seemed to have to shout to him between earthquake shocks. He was thinking it was absurd of that fellow Mackenzie to imagine that he could know any uncle of his. He saw very vividly also the face of his girl who was a pacifist. It worried him not to know what expression her face would have if she heard of his occupation, now. Disgust? . . . He was standing with his greasy, sticky hands held out from the flaps of his tunic. . . . Perhaps disgust! . . . It was impossible to think in this row. . . . His very thick soles moved glulily and came up after suction. . . . He remembered he had not sent a runner along to I.B.D. Orderly Room to see how many of his crowd would be wanted for garrison fatigue next day, and this annoyed him acutely. He would have no end of a job warning the officers he detailed. They would all be in brothels down in the town by now. . . . He could not work out what the girl's expression would be. He was never to see her again, so what the hell did it matter? . . . Disgust, probably! . . . He remembered that he had not looked to see how Mackenzie was getting on in the noise. He did not want to see Mackenzie. He was a bore. . . . How would her face

express disgust? He had never seen her express disgust. She had a perfectly undistinguished face. Fair . . . O God, how suddenly his bowels turned over! . . . Thinking of the girl. . . . The face below him grinned at the roof—the half face! The nose was there, half the mouth with the teeth showing in the firelight. . . . It was extraordinary how defined the peaked nose and the serrated teeth were in that mess. . . . The eye looked jauntily at the peak of the canvas hut roof. . . . Gone with a grin. Singular the fellow should have spoken! After he was dead. He must have been dead when he spoke. It had been done with the last air automatically going out of the lungs. A reflex action, probably, in the dead. . . . If he, Tietjens, had given the fellow the leave he wanted he would be alive now! . . . Well, he was quite right not to have given the poor devil his leave. He was, anyhow, better where he was. And so was he, Tietjens. He had not had a single letter from home since he had been out this time! Not a single letter. Not even gossip. Not a bill. Some circulars of old furniture dealers. They never neglected him! They had got beyond the sentimental stage at home. Obviously so. . . . He wondered if his bowels would turn over again if he thought of the girl. He was gratified that they had. It showed that he had strong feelings. . . . He thought about her deliberately. Hard. Nothing happened. He thought of her fair, undistinguished, fresh face that made your heart miss a beat when you thought about it. His heart missed a beat. Obedient heart! Like the first primrose. Not *any* primrose. The *first* primrose. Under a bank with the hounds breaking through the under-wood. . . . It was sentimental to say *Du bist wie eine Blume*. . . . Damn the German language! But that fellow was a Jew. . . . One should not say that one's young woman was like a flower, *any* flower. Not even to oneself. That was sentimental. But one might say one special flower. A *man* could say that. A man's job. She smelt like a primrose when you kissed her. But, damn it, he had never kissed her. So how did he know how she smelt! She was a little tranquil, golden spot. He himself

must be a—eunuch. By temperament. That dead fellow down there must be one, physically. It was probably indecent to think of a corpse as impotent. But he was, very likely. That would be why his wife had taken up with the prize-fighter Red Evans Williams of Castell Goch. If he had given the fellow leave the prize-fighter would have smashed him to bits. The police of Pontardulais had asked that he should not be let come home—because of the prize-fighter. So he was better dead. Or perhaps not. Is death better than discovering that your wife is a whore and being done in by her cully? *Gwell angau na gwillth*, their own regimental badge bore the words. "*Death is better than dishonour*" . . . No, not death, *angau* means pain. Anguish! Anguish is better than dishonour. The devil it is! Well, that fellow would have got both. Anguish and dishonour. Dishonour from his wife and anguish when the prize-fighter hit him. . . . That was no doubt why his half-face grinned at the roof. The gory side of it had turned brown. Already! Like a mummy of a Pharaoh, *that* half looked. . . . He was born to be a blooming casualty. Either by shell-fire or by the fist of the prize-fighter. . . . Pontardulais! Somewhere in Mid-Wales. He had been through it once in a car, on duty. A long, dull village. Why should anyone want to go back to it?

A tender butler's voice said beside him: "This ain't your job, sir. Sorry you had to do it. . . . Lucky it wasn't you, sir. . . . This was what done it, I should say."

Sergeant-Major Cowley was standing beside him holding a bit of metal that was heavy in his hand and like a candlestick. He was aware that a moment before he had seen the fellow, Mackenzie, bending over the brazier, putting the sheet of iron back. Careful officer, Mackenzie. The Huns must not be allowed to see the light from the brazier. The edge of the sheet had gone down on the dead man's tunic, nipping a bit by the shoulder. The face had disappeared in shadow. There were several men's faces in the doorway.

Tietjens said: "No: I don't believe that did it. Something bigger. . . . Say a prize-fighter's fist. . . ."

Sergeant Cowley said:

"No, no prize-fighter's fist would have done that sir. . . ."
And then he added, "Oh, I take your meaning, sir . . . O Nine Morgan's wife, sir. . . ."

Tietjens moved, his feet sticking, towards the sergeant-major's table. The other runner had placed a tin basin with water on it. There was a hooded candle there now, alight; the water shone innocently, a half-moon of translucence wavering over the white bottom of the basin. The runner from Pontardulais said:

"Wash your hands first, sir!"

He said:

"Move a little out of it, cahptn." He had a rag in his black hands. Tietjens moved out of the blood that had run in a thin stream under the table. The man was on his knees, his hands rubbing Tietjens's boot welts heavily, with the rags. Tietjens placed his hands in the innocent water and watched light purple-scarlet mist diffuse itself over the pale half-moon. The man below him breathed heavily, sniffing. Tietjens said:

"Thomas, O Nine Morgan was your mate?"

The man's face, wrinkled, dark and ape-like, looked up.

"He was a good pal, pore old ——," he said. "You would not like, surely to goodness, to go to mess with your shoes all bloody."

"If I had given him leave," Tietjens said, "he would not be dead now."

"No, surely not," One Seven Thomas answered. "But it is all one. Evans of Castell Goch would surely to goodness have killed him."

"So you knew, too, about his wife!" Tietjens said.

"We thoct it wass that," One Seven Thomas answered, "or you would have given him leave, cahptn. You are a good cahptn."

A sudden sense of the publicity that that life was came over Tietjens.

"You knew that," he said. "I wonder what the hell you fellows don't know and all!" he thought. "If anything went wrong with one it would be all over the command in two days. Thank God, Sylvia can't get here!"

The man had risen to his feet. He fetched a towel of the sergeant-major's, very white with a red border.

"We know," he said, "that your honour is a very goot cahptn. And Captain McKechnie is a *fery* goot cahptn. And Captain Prentiss, and Le'tennant Jonce of Merthyr . . ."

Tietjens said:

"That'll do. Tell the sergeant-major to give you a pass to go with your mate to the hospital. Get someone to wash this floor."

Two men were carrying the remains of O Nine Morgan, the trunk wrapped in a ground sheet. They carried him in a bandy chair out of the hut. His arms over his shoulders waved a jocular farewell. There would be an ambulance stretcher on bicycle wheels outside.

PART IV
MOUNTAIN, SEA AND DESERT

MOUNTAIN, SEA AND DESERT

4

THE DEAD

FROM

"THE COLLECTED POEMS OF RUPERT BROOKE"

*Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely, and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be,
Of work and joy, and that unhopèd serene
That men call age; and those who would have been
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.*

*Blow bugles, blow! They brought us for our dearth,
Holiness lacked so long, and love and pain,
Honor has come back, as a king, to earth,
And paid his subjects with a royal wage
And nobleness walks in our ways again
And we have come into our heritage.*

GALLIPOLI

FROM

"GALLIPOLI" BY JOHN MASEFIELD

. . . On Friday, the 23rd of April, the weather cleared so that the work could be begun. In fine weather in Mudros a haze of beauty comes upon the hills and water till their loveliness is unearthly it is so rare. Then the bay is like a blue jewel, and the hills lose their savagery, and glow, and are gentle, and the sun comes up from Troy, and the peaks of Samothrace change colour, and all the marvellous ships in the harbour are transfigured. The land of Lemnos was beautiful with flowers at that season, in the brief Aegean spring, and to seawards always, in the bay, were the ships, more ships, perhaps, than any port of modern times has known; they seemed like half the ships of the world. In this crowd of shipping, strange beautiful Greek vessels passed, under rigs of old time, with sheep and goats and fish, for sale, and the tugs of the Thames and Mersey met again the ships they had towed of old, bearing a new freight, of human courage. The transports (all painted black) lay in tiers, well within the harbour, the men-of-war nearer Mudros and the entrance. Now in all that city of ships, so busy with passing picket-boats, and noisy with the labour of men, the getting of the anchors began. Ship after ship, crammed with soldiers, moved slowly out of harbour, in the lovely day, and felt again the heave of the sea. No such gathering of fine ships has ever been seen upon this earth, and the beauty and the exaltation of the youth upon them made them like sacred things as they moved away. All the thousands of men aboard them gathered on deck to see, till each rail was thronged. These men had come from all parts of the British world, from

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Africa, Australia, Canada, India, the Mother Country, New Zealand and remote islands in the sea. They had said good-bye to home that they might offer their lives in the cause we stand for. In a few hours at most, as they well knew, perhaps a tenth of them would have looked their last on the sun, and be a part of foreign earth or dumb things that the tides push. Many of them would have disappeared forever from the knowledge of man, blotted from the book of life none would know how, by a fall or chance shot in the darkness, in the blast of a shell, or alone, like a hurt beast, in some scrub or gully, far from comrades and the English speech and the English singing. And perhaps a third of them would be mangled, blinded or broken, lamed, made imbecile or disfigured, with the colour and the taste of life taken from them, so that they would never more move with comrades nor exult in the sun. And those not taken thus would be under the ground, sweating in the trench, carrying sand-bags up the sap, dodging death and danger, without rest or food or drink, in the blazing sun or the frost of the Gallipoli night, till death seemed relaxation and a wound a luxury. But as they moved out these things were but the end they asked, the reward they had come for, the unseen cross upon the breast. All that they felt was a gladness of exultation that their young courage was to be used. They went like kings in a pageant to the imminent death.

As they passed from moorings to the man-of-war anchorage on their way to the sea, their feeling that they had done with life and were going out to something new, welled up in those battalions; they cheered and cheered till the harbour rang with cheering. As each ship crammed with soldiers drew near the battleships, the men swung their caps and cheered again, and the sailors answered, and the noise of cheering swelled, and the men in the ships not yet moving joined in, and the men ashore, till all the life in the harbour was giving thanks that it could go to death rejoicing. All was beautiful in that gladness of men about to die, but the most moving thing was the greatness of their generous hearts. As they passed the French ships the

memory of old quarrels healed, and the sense of what sacred France has done and endured, in this great war, and the pride of having such men as the French for comrades, rose up in their warm souls, and they cheered the French ships more, even, than their own.

They left the harbour very, very slowly; this tumult of cheering lasted a long time; no one who heard it will ever forget it, or think of it unshaken. It broke the hearts of all there with pity and pride: it went beyond the guard of the English heart. Presently all were out, and the fleet stood across for Tenedos, and the sun went down with marvellous colour, lighting island after island and the Asian peaks, and those left behind in Mudros trimmed their lamps knowing that they had been for a little brought near to the heart of things.

The next day, the 24th of April, the troops of the landing parties went on board the warships and mine-sweepers which were to take them ashore. At midnight the fleet got under way from Tenedos and stood out for the Peninsula. Dawn was to be at five, the landings on the flanks were to take place then, the others at half-past five, after the fleet had bombarded the beaches. Very few of the soldiers of the landing parties slept that night; the excitement of the morrow kept them awake, as happened to Nelson's sailors before Trafalgar. It was a very still fine night, slightly hazy, with a sea so still that the ships had no trouble with their long tows of boats and launches. As it began to grow light the men went down into the boats, and the two flanking parties started for the outer beaches S and Y. The guns of the fleet now opened a heavy fire upon the Turkish positions and the big guns on the Asian shore sent over a few shells in answer; but the Turks near the landing places reserved their fire. During the intense bombardment by the fleet, when the ships were trembling like animals with the blasts of the explosions, the picket boats towing the lighters went ahead and the tow-loads of crowded men started for the main landings on beaches V, W and X.

It was now light, and the haze on Sedd-el-Bahr was clearing away so that those in charge of the boats could see what they were doing. Had they attempted an attack in the dark on those unsurveyed beaches among the fierce and dangerous tide rips the loss of life would have been very great. As it was, the exceeding fierceness of the currents added much to the difficulty and danger of the task. . . . Three companies of the Dublin Fusiliers were to land from towed lighters, the rest of the party from a tramp steamer, the collier *River Clyde*. This ship, a conspicuous sea-mark at Cape Helles throughout the rest of the campaign, had been altered to carry and land troops. Great gangways or entry ports had been cut in her sides on the level of her between decks, and platforms had been built out upon her sides below these, so that men might run from her in a hurry. The plan was to beach her as near the shore as possible, and then drag or sweep the lighters, which she towed, into position between her and the shore, so as to make a kind of boat bridge from her to the beach. When the lighters were so moored as to make this bridge, the entry ports were to be opened, the waiting troops were to rush out on to the external platforms, run from them on to the lighters and so to the shore. The ship's upper deck and bridge were protected with boiler plate and sandbags, and a casement for machine guns was built upon her fo'c'sle, so that she might reply to the enemy's fire.

Five picket-boats, each towing five boats or launches full of men, steamed alongside the *River Clyde* and went ahead when she grounded. She took the ground rather to the right of the little beach, some 400 yards from the ruins of Sedd-el-Bahr castle, before the Turks had opened fire, but almost as she grounded, when the picket-boats with their tows were ahead of her, only twenty or thirty yards from the beach, every rifle and machine gun in the castle, the town above it, and in the curved low strongly trenched hill along the bay, began a murderous fire upon ship and boats. There was no question of their missing. They had their target on the front and both flanks at

ranges between 100 and 300 yards in clear daylight, thirty boats bunched together and crammed with men and a good big ship. The first outbreak of fire made the bay as white as a rapid, for the Turks fired not less than ten thousand shots a minute for the first few minutes of that attack. Those not killed in the boats at the first discharge jumped overboard to wade or swim ashore, many were killed in the water, many, who were wounded, were swept away and drowned, others, trying to swim in the fierce current, were drowned by the weight of their equipment; but some reached the shore, and these instantly doubled out to cut the wire entanglements, and were killed, or dashed for the cover of a bank of sand or raised beach which runs along the curve of the bay. Those very few who reached this cover were out of immediate danger, but they were only a handful. The boats were destroyed where they grounded.

Meanwhile, the men of the *River Clyde* tried to make their bridge of boats, by sweeping the lighters into position and mooring them between the ship and the shore. They were killed as they worked, but others took their places, the bridge was made, and some of the Munsters dashed along it from the ship and fell in heaps as they ran. As a second company followed, the moorings of the lighters broke or were shot, the men leaped into the water and were drowned or killed, or reached the beach and were killed, or fell wounded there, and lay under fire getting wound after wound till they died; very, very few reached the sandbank. More brave men jumped aboard the lighters to remake the bridge. They were swept away or shot to pieces; the average life on those boats was some three minutes long, but they remade the bridge, and the third company of the Munsters doubled down to death along it under a storm of shrapnel which scarcely a man survived. The big guns in Asia were now shelling the *River Clyde*, and the hell of rapid fire never paused. More men tried to land, headed by Brigadier General Napier, who was instantly killed, with nearly all his followers. Then for long hours the remainder stayed on board,

down below in the grounded steamer, while the shots beat on her plates with a rattling clang which never stopped. Her twelve machine guns fired back, killing any Turk who showed, but nothing could be done to support the few survivors of the landing, which now lay under cover of the sandbank on the other side of the beach. It was almost certain death to try to leave the ship, but all through the day men leaped from her (with leave or without it) to bring water or succour to the wounded on the boats or beach. A hundred brave men gave their lives thus: every man there earned the Cross that day: a boy earned it by one of the bravest deeds of the war, leaping into the sea with a rope in his teeth to try to secure a drifting lighter.

The day passed thus, but at nightfall the Turks' fire paused, and the men came ashore from the *River Clyde*, almost unharmed. They joined the survivors on the beach and at once attacked the old fort and the village above it. These works were strongly held by the enemy. All had been ruined by the fire from the fleet, but in the rubble and ruin of old masonry there were thousands of hidden riflemen backed by machine guns. Again and again they beat off our attacks, for there was a bright moon and they knew the ground, and our men had to attack uphill over wire and broken earth and heaped stones in all the wreck and confusion and strangeness of war at night in a new place. Some of the Dublins and Munsters went astray in the ruins, and were wounded far from their fellows and so lost. The Turks became more daring after dark; while the light lasted they were checked by the *River Clyde's* machine guns, but at midnight they gathered unobserved and charged. They came right down onto the beach, and in the darkness and moonlight much terrible and confused fighting followed. Many were bayoneted, many shot, there was wild firing and crying, and then the Turk attack melted away, and their machine guns began again. When day dawned, the survivors of the landing party were crouched under the shelter of the sandbank; they had had no rest; most of them had been fighting all

night, all had landed across the corpses of their friends. No retreat was possible, nor was it dreamed of, but to stay there was hopeless. Lieutenant Colonel Doughty-Wylie gathered them together for an attack: the fleet opened a terrific fire upon the ruins of the fort and village, and the landing party went forward again, fighting from bush to bush and from stone to stone, till the ruins were in their hands. Shells still fell among them, single Turks, lurking under cover, sniped them and shot them, but the landing had been made good, and V beach was secured to us.

* * * * *

Few people who have not seen modern war can understand what it is like. They look at a map, which is a small flat surface, and find it difficult to believe that a body of men could have had difficulty in passing from one point upon it to another. They think that they themselves would have found no difficulty, that they would not have been weary nor thirsty, the distance demanded of them being only a mile, possibly a mile and a quarter, and the reward a very great one. They think that troops who failed to pass across that mile must have been in some way wanting, and that had they been there, either in command or in the attack, the results would have been different.

One can only answer, that in modern war it is not easy to carry a well-defended site by direct attack. In modern war, you may not know, till fire breaks out upon you, where the defence, which you have to attack, is hidden. You may not know (in darkness, in a strange land) more than vaguely which is your "front," and you may pass by your enemy, or over him, or under him without seeing him. You may not see your enemy at all. You may fight for days and never see an enemy. In modern war troops see no enemy till he attacks them; then, in most cases if they are well entrenched with many guns behind them, they can destroy him.

The Allied officers, looking through their field glasses at the ground to be attacked, could see only rough, sloping

ground, much gullied, much overgrown, with a few clumps of trees, a few walls, orchards and houses, but no guns, no trenches, no enemy. Aeroplanes scouting over the Turks could see men but not the trenches nor the guns, they could only report that they suspected them to be in such a place. Sometimes in the mornings men would notice that the earth was turned newly on some bare patch on the hill, but none could be sure that this digging was not a ruse to draw fire. The trenches were hidden cunningly, often with a head-cover of planks so strewn with earth and planted with scrub as to be indistinguishable from the ground about. The big guns were coloured cunningly, like a bird or snake upon the ground. From above in an aeroplane an observer could not pick them out so as to be certain, if they were not in action at the time. Brave men scouting forward at night to reconnoitre brought back some information, but not more than enough to show that the Turks were there in force. No man in the Allied Army expected less than a desperate battle; no officer in the world could have made it anything but that, with all the odds against us. Nothing could be done but cover the Turk position with the fire of every gun on shore or in the ships and then send the men forward, to creep or dash as far as they could, and then dig themselves in.

Let the reader imagine himself to be facing three miles of any very rough broken sloping ground known to him, ground for the most part gorse-thyme-and-scrub-covered, being poor soil, but in some places beautiful with flowers (especially "a spiked yellow flower with a whitish leaf") and on others green from cultivation. Let him say to himself that he and an army of his friends are about to advance up the slope towards the top and that as they will be advancing in a line, along the whole length of the three miles, he will only see the advance of those comparatively near to him, since folds or dips in the ground will hide the others. Let him, before he advances, look earnestly along the line of the hill, as it shows up clear, in blazing sunlight only a mile from him, to see his tactical objective, one little clump of pines, three hundred yards away,

across what seem to be fields. Let him see in the whole length of the hill no single human being, nothing but scrub, earth, a few scattered buildings, of the Levantine type (dirty white with roofs of dirty red) and some patches of dark Scotch pine, growing as the pine loves, on bleak crests. Let him imagine himself to be more weary than he has ever been in his life before, and dirtier than he has ever believed it possible to be, and parched with thirst, nervous, wild-eyed and rather lousy. Let him think that he has not slept for more than a few minutes together for eleven days and nights, and that in all his waking hours he has been fighting for his life, often hand to hand in the dark with a fierce enemy, and that after each fight he has had to dig himself a hole in the ground, often with his hands, and then walk three or four roadless miles to bring up heavy boxes under fire. Let him think, too, that in all those eleven days he has never for an instant been out of the thunder of cannon, that waking or sleeping their devastating crash has been blasting the air across within a mile or two, and this from an artillery so terrible that each discharge beats as it were a wedge of shock between the skull-bone and the brain. Let him think too that never, for an instant, in all that time, has he been free or even partly free from the peril of death in its most sudden and savage forms, and that hourly in all that time he has seen his friends blown to pieces at his side, or dismembered, or drowned, or driven mad, or stabbed, or sniped by some unseen stalker, or bombed in the dark sap with a handful of dynamite in a beef-tin, till their blood is caked upon his clothes and thick upon his face, and that he knows, as he stares at the hill, that in a few moments, more of that dwindling band, already too few, God knows how many too few, for the task to be done, will be gone the same way, and that he himself may reckon that he has done with life, tasted and spoken and loved his last, and that in a few minutes more may be blasted dead, or lying bleeding in the scrub, with perhaps his face gone and a leg and an arm broken, unable to move but still alive, unable to drive away the flies or screen the ever-

dropping rain, in a place where none will find him, or be able to help him, a place where he will die and rot and shrivel, till nothing is left of him but a few rags and a few remnants and a little identification-disc flapping on his bones in the wind. Then let him hear the intermittent crash and rattle of the fire augment suddenly and awfully in a roaring, blasting roll, unspeakable and unthinkable, while the air above, that has long been whining and whistling, becomes filled with the scream of shells passing like great cats of death in the air; let him see the slope of the hill vanish in a few moments into the white, yellow and black smokes of great explosions shot with fire, and watch the lines of white puffs marking the hill in streaks where the shrapnel searches a suspected trench; and then, in the height of the tumult, when his brain is shaking in his head, let him pull himself together with his friends, and clamber up out of the trench, to go forward against an invisible enemy, safe in some unseen trench expecting him.

The Twenty-ninth Division went forward under these conditions on the 6th of May. They dashed on, or crawled, for a few yards at a time, then dropped for a few instants before squirming on again. In such an advance men do not see the battlefield. They see the world as the rabbit sees it, crouching on the ground, just their own little patch. On broken ground like that, full of dips and rises, men may be able to see nothing but perhaps the ridge of a bank ten feet ahead, with the dust flying in spouts all along it, as bullets hit it, some thousand a minute, and looking back or to their flanks they may see no one but perhaps a few men of their own platoon lying tense but expectant, ready for the sign to advance while the bullets pipe over them in a never-ending birdlike croon. They may be shut off by some all-important foot of ground from seeing how they are fronting, from all knowledge of what the next platoon is doing or suffering. It may be quite certain death to peep over that foot of ground in order to find out, and while they wait for a few instants shells may burst in their midst and destroy a half of them. Then the rest, nerving themselves,

rush up the ridge, and fall in a line dead under machine-gun fire. The supports come up, creeping over their corpses, get past the ridge, into scrub which some shell has set on fire. Men fall wounded in the fire, and the cartridges in their bandoliers explode and slowly kill them. The survivors crawl through the scrub, half-choked, and come out on a field full of flowers tangled three feet high with strong barbed wire. They wait for a while, to try to make out where the enemy is. They may see nothing but the slope of the field running up to a sky line, and a flash of distant sea on a flank, but no sign of any enemy, only the crash of guns and the pipe and croon and spurt of bullets. Gathering themselves together their brave men dash out to cut the wire and are killed; others take their places and are killed; others step out with too great a pride even to stoop, and pull up the supports of the wires and fling them down, and fall dead on top of them, having perhaps cleared a couple of yards. Then a couple of machine guns open on the survivors and kill them all in thirty seconds, with the concentrated fire of a battalion.

The supports come up, and hear about the wire from some wounded man who has crawled back through the scrub. They send back word, "Held up by wire," and in time the message comes to the telephone which has just been blown to pieces by a shell. Presently when the telephone is repaired, the message reaches the gunners, who fire high explosive shells on to the wire, and on to the slopes where the machine guns may be hidden. Then the supports go on over the flowers and are met midway by a concentrated fire of shells, shrapnel, machine guns and rifles. Those who are not killed lie down among the flowers and begin to scrape little heaps of earth with their hands to give protection to their heads. In the light sandy marl this does not take long, though many are blown to pieces or hit in the back as they scrape. As before, they cannot see how the rest of the attack is faring, nor even where the other platoons of the battalion are; they lie scraping in the roots of daffodils and lilies, while bullets sing and shriek a foot or two over their

heads. A man peering from his place in the flowers may make out that the man next to him, some three yards away, is dead, and that the man beyond is praying, the man beyond him cursing, and the man beyond him out of his mind from nerves or thirst.

Long hours pass, but the air above them never ceases to cry like a live thing with bullets flying. Men are killed or maimed, and the wounded cry for water. Men get up to give them water and are killed. Shells fall at regular intervals along the field. The waiting men count the seconds between the shells to check the precision of the battery's fire. Some of the bursts fling the blossoms and bulbs of flowers into the bodies of men, where they are found long afterwards by the X-rays. Bursts and roars of fire on either flank tell of some intense moment in other parts of the line. Every feeling of terror and mental anguish and anxiety goes through the mind of each man there, and is put down by resolve.

The supports come up, they rise with a cheer, and get out of the accursed flowers, into a gully where some men of their regiment are already lying dead. There is a little wood to their front; they make for that, and suddenly come upon a deep and narrow Turk trench full of men. This is their first sight of the enemy. They leap down into the trench and fight hand to hand, kill and are killed, in the long grave already dug. They take the trench, but opening from the trench are saps, which the Turks still hold. Men are shot dead at these saps by Turk sharpshooters cunningly screened within them. Bullets fall in particular places in the trench from snipers hidden in the trees of the wood. The men send back for bombs, others try to find out where the rest of the battalion lies, or send word that from the noise of the fire there must be a battery of machine guns beyond the wood, if the guns would shell it.

Presently, before the bombs come, bombs begin to drop among them from the Turks. Creeping up, the men catch them in their hands before they explode and fling them back so that they burst among the Turks. Some have their hands blown

off, others their heads, in doing this, but the bloody game of catch goes on till no Turks are left in the sap, only a few wounded groaning men who slowly bleed to death there. After long hours, the supports come up and a storm of high explosives searches the little wood, and then with a cheer the remnant goes forward out of the trench into the darkness of the pines. Fire opens on them from snipers in the trees and from machine guns everywhere; they drop and die, and the survivors see no enemy, only their friends falling and a place where no living thing can pass. Men find themselves suddenly alone, with all their friends dead, and no enemy in sight, but the rush of bullets filling the air. They go back to the trench, not afraid, but in a kind of maze, and as they take stock and count their strength there comes the roar of the Turkish war cry, the drum-like proclamation of the faith, and the Turks come at them with the bayonet. Then that lonely remnant of a platoon stands to it with rapid fire, and the machine gun rattles like a motor bicycle, and some ribald or silly song goes up, and the Turks fail to get home, but die or waver and retreat and are themselves charged as they turn. It is evening now; the day has passed in long hours of deep experience, and the men have made two hundred yards. They send back for supports and orders, link up, if they are lucky, with some other part of their battalion, whose adventures, fifty yards away, have been as intense, but wholly different, and prepare the Turk trench for the night. Presently word reaches them from some faraway H.Q. (some dug-out five hundred yards back, in what seems, by comparison, like peaceful England) that there are no supports, and that the orders are to hold the line at all costs and prepare for a fresh advance on the morrow. Darkness falls, and ammunition and water come up, and the stretcher-bearers hunt for the wounded by the groans, while the Turks search the entire field with shell to kill the supports which are not there. Some of the men in the trench creep out to their front, and are killed there as they fix a wire entanglement. The survivors make ready for the Turk attack, certain

soon to come. There is no thought of sleep; it is too cold for sleep; the men shiver as they stare into the night; they take the coats of the dead, and try to get a little warmth. There is no moon and the rain begins. The marl at the bottom of the trench is soon a sticky mud, and the one dry patch is continually being sniped. A few exhausted ones fall not into sleep but into nervous dreams, full of twitches and cries, like dogs' nightmares, and away at sea some ship opens with her great guns at an unseen target up the hill. The terrific crashes shake the air; someone sees a movement in the grass and fires; others start up and fire. The whole irregular line starts up and fires, the machine guns rattle, the officers curse, and the guns behind, expecting an attack, send shells into the woods. Then slowly the fire drops and dies, and stray Turks, creeping up, fling bombs into the trench.

From the London Times
Monday, May, 1, 1916

GENERAL TOWNSHEND SURRENDERS

The Secretary of the War Office on Saturday issued the following statement:

After a resistance protracted for 143 days and conducted with a gallantry and fortitude that will be for ever memorable, General Townshend has been compelled by the final exhaustion of his supplies to surrender.

Before doing so he destroyed his guns and munitions.

The force under him consists of 2,970 British troops of all ranks and services, some 6,000 Indian troops, and their followers.

THE TURKISH REPORT

CREDIT CLAIMED BY GERMANS

Amsterdam, April 29.—A Constantinople official telegram received here via Berlin says:—

"The Vice-Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish Army announced that the British garrison of Kut-el-Amara, 13,300 strong, under General Townshend, has surrendered unconditionally."

*April 30.—According to a Berlin telegram, the German newspapers attribute the Turkish success at Kut-el-Amara to the preparations of the late Marshal von der Goltz. The *Vossische Zeitung* considers that the fall of Kut is the heaviest blow ever struck at Great Britain, and other papers write in a similar vein.—Reuter.*

ON TO BAGDAD

FROM

"THESE MEN, THY FRIENDS" BY EDWARD THOMPSON

Three weeks later, Hart's brigade were out of the line, and Kenrick's had finished their spell in it. Hart had his friend to dinner. There was another guest, Major Baker, a gunner. This was "Floury" Baker, who must not be confused with "Beery" Baker, Major A. L. E. Baker, also a gunner. This Baker, of the unbibulous initials F. L., was an eager little man whose profession was his passion; he had a reputation as a crank.

Floury talked shop. Since the present job was to kill under penalty of being killed oneself otherwise, he gave his thoughts and dreams to ways of vexing the enemy.

He was cursing the mirage. "Last January, at Hanna, I could have sworn that I'd got the range of a Turco battery. I saw the wheels of a gun disappear, and I registered a direct hit. But next day it was firing away as merrily as ever."

"I know," said Hart. "An F.O.O. we had with us at the Wadi saw—we all did—a squadron of Arab horse as clear as the crowd at a football match. He tried them at sixteen hundred yards, and got nowhere near them—lengthened the range a thousand, and was still short. But Johnny had *us* taped," he added. "No bothering about mirage for him. He knew the land, and the distance of every blotch and pimple on it."

But the enthusiast still pondered that elusive gun. "And yet, you know, I might have been right. I might have upset the thing without smashing it. At Festubert I had thirty-six men out of forty-seven knocked out—that was direct enough hits. But I was in action again next day, with the same guns."

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Mackay, the youngest subaltern, spoke. "What was Hanna like for the infantry, Major?" He had had a brother killed at Hanna.

"Like every other show," said Floury. "Frontal attack, with no attempt to manoeuvre or outflank. You see, conscription was bound to come soon, there was no need to save men. So the infantry were chucked across a billiard-table at Johnny Turk sitting tight in his trenches, with a mirage putting him out of space, out of time, with nothing that a gunner could get a bead on to. It began at Sheikh Saad, with five thousand casualties for nothing. We were held on the left bank, but the Leicesters went through on the right. They were told to kill and to go for their man high. They did. They wanted to, after they'd gone through purgatory on the flat."

Hart's adjutant, Sinclair, nodded. "It was easy to tell afterwards where they'd been. There were rows of Arabs bayoneted through the face. Kneeling, most of them."

"The right bank was *mostly* held by Buddoos," said Floury. "And the Turk had no boats, whereas we had a bridge of them. We could have kept three-quarters of his troops useless on the left bank, while we mopped up the rest. Instead, we asked for it in the neck on both banks. And then followed one show after another of the same sort, all conducted on the same 'war of attrition' lines. They had dumped all those Indian generals on us—sorry, Hart! I forgot you were all Indian Army ——"

"Carry on, Floury."

"Their notion of war is long shots at niggers in the hills, who never come nearer than rifle range unless they know you're asleep. And they still—*still*, after Gallipoli, and after Ctesiphon! think the Turk's that sort!" He brooded, while the thunder gathered in his face. "But it isn't the Zakka Khels—or the Mohmands—or the Raja of Bong"—he spoke with fierce and earnest scorn—"that we're fighting now. The Turk is a gentleman with a head on him, and he doesn't put up a free show."

Hart, watching Mackay's eyes, was distressed. He started

to speak. But what was there to say? The boy's brother had been used up at a time when they were tossing clean, decent lives by thousands into a useless pit of sacrifice. He had known Sandy Mackay, and guessed what he must have meant to those who loved him.

They rose from dinner, to divide up for bridge. Hugh Mackay spoke again. "What was the idea behind all that April fighting—after Hanna and after Dujaileh? Didn't everyone know that Dujaileh was the last chance?"

"Idea?" Floury repeated the word. "Idea? None whatever—unless it was to kill off as many Scotchmen as possible!" He had forgotten his questioner's nationality; and he was too sore to desire to be epigrammatic. "As if the Jocks weren't first-class men," he mused, "who deserved to be used up in a decent show, with decent brains directing it! Instead, they were chucked at a blank wall."

Hart was silent as they cut for partners and dealt. He had put a hand on Mackay's shoulder and drawn him to his table with Kenrick and Baker. There had been an ineffable gentleness in the action, unconscious and unreasoned. That death at Hanna had broken up the deeps in the boy's spirit, and the floods were gathering again and menacing the bridge that duty and daily custom had begun to build. The touch of Hart's hand turned them back.

But who was to turn them back from the bridge by which Hart was trying to regain his lost reliant self? He was back before those invulnerable lines—what *had* been the use of tossing down those thousands of lives? It did not help to know that it had been done to satisfy the public who demanded to feel that everything was being done to save their hero. Was their hero worth saving? At such a price? The brave ass who kept sending out—so it was rumoured in the Relieving Force—facetious and taunting messages, asking if his rescuers were "on the right river." And he had told them, before ever the four months' muddling began, that he had only a week's food, so that they had been hurried into action uselessly and aim-

lessly, flung in as they arrived, in fragments and relays, to be shot down in detail. And why *hadn't* he helped them at Dujaileh? He had held a footing their side of the river, as well as his own, and he had guns and ammunition. Men were beginning to say that he had let himself be invested by an Arab force, and one inferior to his own. This was the underground stream of distrust and suspicion, sapping at men's courage and will to fight. Revolutions begin so; but the English are disciplined, and they go on dying, though they know it is for fools and in a cause chosen and directed by fools. But who was going to be fair to the brave man who had dashed up this stream, winning battle after battle and surprising towns, till he had almost rushed Baghdad itself, as though it were a hen-run and he a tiger? Hart knew he was in no mood to be fair—he had lost too many friends. He knew his fellow-officers were in no mood to be fair. But it was hard to feel that their sufferings were unguessed, and their difficulties belittled, while one man remained the hero of the newspaper folk, the *bandarlog* who govern us. You must not criticise this man, just as you must not criticise Nelson, or Wellington, or Lord Roberts. These were officially perfect in their chivalry and valour, "The Christian soldiers" of our praise.

As though he had read Hart's thoughts, Mackay spoke. "But wasn't it important to save Kut?" he asked. It is easier to look at your hopes and happiness in the dust, if you know they have been cast there in a great cause.

"No," said Floury. "Townshend, perhaps. But not that dirty symbol. And if Townshend had been as worth saving as we thought he was, he'd have helped us, instead of sitting tight and screaming, 'Get me out of this.'"

"What went wrong with him?"

But Floury had seen the anxiety in the boy's face. This was no casual curiosity; there was too much hunger in eyes and voice. "The newspaper folk won't admit that anything went wrong," he said evasively. He looked at Hart, who knew Mackay and his reasons, whatever they were, for pressing this

matter home. He read in Hart's face the signal to reply; so he answered, but pausingly and carefully.

"He got bewildered, I guess. He had the fright of his life at Ctesiphon—it was a foretaste of the new Turk that had just come from pushing us out of Gallipoli and *knew* that if he sat tight on the level the machine-guns would do the rest. No one has ever known what a shock that Ctesiphon business was—but we can tell when we see how Townshend let himself be tied up in Kut and never made a kick to get free. He wasn't a general—but he had pluck and dash. He was a sort of hawk, if you like; and he was chasing pigeons—up to Ctesiphon. But at Ctesiphon he came up against the man that owned the pigeons, and he felt the man's net flutter round his face. You can see that at Kut he was scared and dazed."

They had cut and dealt. But Mackay was still looking across the table wistfully. "I don't want to hold up the play, Major," he said. "But the shows seem to have left a lot of soreness, and it isn't pleasant to feel it. I mean," he added, colouring, for he was expressing himself lamely and might seem to be criticising what his senior had said, "you've got this division crabbing the 13th and the 13th crabbing back." He waited, silent.

For the War had entered upon its phase of greatest strain. The flame of that earlier patriotism had sunk into a sullen glow; the early reputations had faded. The Somme was showing daily how resourceless were the men whose life and study was war. Even at sea our old skill was seen to falter—the shock of Jutland had gone deep. After America came in, we were able to rest in the knowledge that no amount of folly and sterile leadership could lose us the final victory, whatever it might be worth. But now, even in the agony of battle bitterness was found—if a new formation bent under sudden trial, it was what you might expect from these damned civilians—if an old formation was shot to pieces, it was what their training made inevitable, for them and for all who were so unfortunate as to come under their command.

Sinclair, the silent, removed his pipe, and answered from the

next table. "You can blame the damned newspapers, Mackay—the swine to whom everything that happens is copy, men's dying and their feelings and attitude in face of death. This war has been run for them—they chucked us away in brigades out here, so that the newspapers might be able to announce a fresh battle to save the great Townshend. And the papers bragged about the 13th when they first came here—bragged to *us*, who had been in Hades and knew it. And the poison was in our minds, and it came out when the fellows they bragged about had their bad show. But *we* knew all about it, all the time. There'd have been no bad blood if it hadn't been for the papers."

This was the longest speech Hart had ever heard Sinclair make. He recognised behind it not alone the just assessor, but the adjutant. The "killing times" would be here again, and soon; it would not help if Indian division were set against British, even in thought and mess-talk, or new army against old. Sinclair continued with a question to their gunner guest.

"Do you remember those newspaper chaps from India, Major?"

"Shall I forget them? I had the job of showing them over Hanna—they didn't understand, and they weren't interested. It was all Sannaiyat, Sannaiyat, the famous Sannaiyat lines. I handed them over to the C.R.A. for that—but they turned up in my mess again afterwards. There was one pukka little swab in spectacles—Jones his name was—who said, "I can't see that there's anything particularly strong about this Sannaiyat position that we'—*we*, gentlemen! *We!* that's what he said, putting us on an honourable equality with himself—'that we are sitting still in front of. It's just trenches on the level.' His mind was back in the bow-and-arrow period; *his* notion of a strong position was something bulgy and beetling above you—just the thing," said Floury broodingly, "for a gunner to range on to. It's that Indian frontier obsession again—chucking stuff at savages."

Sinclair reinforced his own statement. "And besides the

newspaper gup, Mackay, you get a few asses in a division itself, fellows who've never seen a shot fired, who carry on the newspaper brag."

"Yes," said Hart. "They scribble up on P boat latrines, 'We took Hanna—a position the Jocks couldn't take.' And the Jocks read it, and start fingering their bayonets. My partner's passed. You pass, Mackay? Two hearts, Floury."

"Pass," said Floury.

"All the same," he said, half an hour later, "if we could have swapped our generals for Townshend, I believe he'd have got us into Kut."

His manner was argumentative, though he was not answering anything that anyone had said. Hart nodded, glad to accept a statement that put some of the lesser bitterness of his mind temporarily by.

D'YE KEN JAN SMUTS?

*D'ye ken Jan Smuts when he's out with his gun,
D'ye ken Jan Smuts when his foe's on the run,
D'ye ken Jan Smuts when he's hunting the Hun,
With his Horse and his Foot in the morning?*

CHORUS

*For the Kaiser he started the whole bloomin' war,
So we'll strafe old Bill till he swanks no more,
And the King shall be boss where the Hun was before,
When we haul up the flag in the morning.*

*And I'll follow Jan Smuts wheresoever I am,
For the swamp and the jungle I don't care a damn,
From Kilimanjaro to Dar-es-Salaam,
Till we hang up the flag in the morning.*

*So here's to Jan Smuts, with three British cheers,
We wouldn't half smile if the toast was in Beers.
But mind that no bloomin' old submarine hears,
Or we'll wake up in heaven in the morning.*

THE BRIGHT AFRICAN SUN

FROM

"MARCHING ON TANGA" BY FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG

The spot which the brigade had reached the night before, where we now rejoined them, lay within earshot of a great stretch of rapids, in thin bush scattered with boulders. A pleasant camp, if it had not been for the intense heat which the moist air of the river seemed only to increase. Here we were well guarded, for the Baluchis and Punjabis had been thrown out some miles ahead. When we arrived the Gurkhas, of which the Kashmiri regiments are mostly composed, were busy catching the small blue barbel of the Pangani, and the whole camp wore an aspect of security and comfort. Reports from the front were hardly reassuring. The hills, which sloped to the right bank of the river in this part of its course, were stony and seared by many deep nullahs, which made it almost impossible to build roads for any but the lightest transport. For two days the 61st Pioneers had been hard at work cutting bush and banking the track, but they had not advanced more than four miles in this difficult country, while beyond the region of stony nullahs stretched a wilderness of swamps, impassable in the rainy season, and still, for all we knew, beset with difficulty. More than this we did not know. All the river valley above our objective, M'kalamo, appeared to be clogged with thorn of an unusual density, so thick, indeed, that aerial reconnaissance was useless.

But somehow a move must be made if we were to keep pace with Hannington, now marching down the railway towards Mombo, and slowly dislodging the enemy whom it was our duty to intercept at his bridgehead. On the evening of the 8th

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my section was ordered to move forward from the riverside camp (Kitumbatu) to join a flying column under Colonel Dyke, composed of his own regiment, the 130th Baluchis, the 29th Punjabis, the 61st Pioneers, and the 27th Mountain Battery. With us we were to carry rations for two days, but no other kit: our heavy panniers were to be left behind as well as all wheeled transport. We must look forward, we were told, to a march of over twenty miles through appalling country and a scrap at the end of it. Everything depended on the speed of our movement. . . .

That evening the light section, with T—— and myself, marched on over the road which the Pioneers had already made as far as the Baluchis' camp, where Colonel Dyke lay sweating under an awning with a bundle of maps and airmen's sketches and reports. It was a pity that neither were very reliable. That night we made a cold meal of bully beef and biscuit. It was the last food I was to taste in forty hours.

We moved off at dawn, immediately in the rear of the Mountain Battery. No Indian Regiment can show a finer set of men. Sikhs, and picked Sikhs, led by the best gunner officers in India and equipped with all the care that goes to a crack corps. Now, as before, our way was shown us by the Pangani, beyond which, to our left, rose the mountain masses which the enemy were supposed to have evacuated the day before. In three places foot-bridges spanned the river, at every bridge-head a village, and these were so slender that we might look upon this flank as secure.

As the sun rose the day became very oppressive, with a clouded sky. Luckily, in this part, the going was easy and the bush sparse.

The battery mules, with their guns in sections on their backs, moved at a great rate. A tremendous pace had been set by the long-legged Baluchis in front, and in the first hour the whole column covered more than four miles; a fine achievement when you consider what one is apt to forget when thinking of all these operations: that the country was not only difficult but

actually within a few miles of the Equator, at a latitude in which as a rule the white man rests under shelter from early morning till sunset. Indeed the pace began to tell a little on some of our men, old campaigners though they were. In ordinary times we should have given them a lift on our ambulances, but here we had no wheeled transport, and the poor devils had to shift for themselves.

By eight o'clock we had travelled nine miles, reaching an open space in which the rest of the brigade were to camp for the night. It lay opposite the mountain called Ngai and the village of Mheza, and we called it the Mheza plain, though it was really little more than an open sandy level. When we passed by, a string of natives came out from the village over the foot-bridge, and walked alongside us with easy strides. A very different type, these, from the painted Masai. In figure they were spare and dignified, with the fine carriage of the Arab: their features too were nobly modelled as those of the Arabs, which showed us, if we were in need of encouragement, that we had reached a zone where the coastal influence was felt in physical types if not in culture. All the men carried weapons: spears with polished shafts of wood and wide blades of an exceedingly graceful form. They walked beside us, I say, and spoke no word; they did not talk even amongst themselves, and, though they bore us company until we were at the level of the next village, did not seem to be very curious of our numbers or equipment. Then they vanished as mysteriously as they had come.

In the next hour we covered only three miles: the pace had been too hot to last. And now the character of the country began to change, as if indeed we had left the highlands. The trees, even the thorn bushes slung with nests of the bottle-bird, grew bigger: their leaves were more green. In addition to the everlasting acacia the baobab reappeared, rising from among tall grasses. The heat was suffocating. I watched T—— riding ahead of me on the mule Simba. He leaned forward in the saddle as though he wanted to rest his head on something.

He didn't tell me that he was ill, but I guessed from his languor and his flushed face that he was starting an attack of fever—and old enemy which he had reason to dread. . . . Thus we marched, painfully, for another two hours, at the end of which halts became more frequent. Evidently the position was not quite obvious in front. We were such a small column that the advance-guard moved only a few hundred yards in front of my bearers, and we were all prepared for action at any moment.

At length we emerged into the swampy zone which we had been expecting. An immense reed-bed separated us from the river, and beyond its belt of acacias rose the mountain named Mafi, beautifully wooded, and in particular a single peak with a white scar of bare cliff on its face, of a peculiarly lovely shape. For a long time I gazed at this white-scarred hill till I knew all its contours by heart. And, as it happened, it was well that I did so. The track, which was in places black and oozy as a road through a peat bog, kept closely in touch with the edge of the reed-bed. It was narrow, so narrow that all our column passed along it in single file; and this part of our progress, walking singly under the screen of the tall reeds, struck me as vaguely charged with expectation. Something must happen very soon, otherwise we could not be moving so very silently and so carefully hidden. The sense of something impending was so strong that I took special notice of the moment and of the scene. No one spoke; the feet of our mules made no sound in the soft earth; but one heard the gentle swish of grasses swept by the moving column. A pair of doves fluttered away from the path. A flight of weaver-birds swept the sky. We could hear the whir of their wings. And then, without any warning, a shell screamed overhead, bursting fifty yards on our right. . . . This time we had not to deal with the four-inch naval guns, but with the eighty millimetre quick-firer, which our men called the "Pip-squeak," because the burst of the shell followed so quickly on the first report, and its scream was so shrill. Still we moved on secretly, and in

absolute silence. The Germans must have been firing at a venture, for we were too well concealed for their observers to have seen us. At any rate, now we were in touch with them and matters might be expected to move swiftly.

But the swamp ended, and in its place we came upon dense bush, bush of a density such as we had never seen before. To deal with it the Pioneers were almost helpless. Even in single file we could not make our way. And the enemy guessed, for that matter, that we were thus entangled. In that thorny trap they might have raked us with their machine-guns, and in a short time Dyke's flying column would have been finished with. But nothing happened. Even the quick-firer ceased troubling us. The dense bush fell to absolute silence but for the lamentations of the hornbills, calling to one another in hollow tones. We moved forward in a series of strange gyrations. We stopped. To the torments of heat and thirst was added a sense of suffocation in the dead air of this close bush, too dense ever to have been swept by a clean wind, and charged with the aromatic odours of the bruised brushwood, a little like verbena but pungent, as the air of a greenhouse in summer with all its windows shut. We halted, waiting for a way to be found. Our Kavirondo bearers sprawled upon the ground in attitudes of fatigue. Poor T—— dismounted. He could hardly sit in the saddle for his fever was now at its height. He sat with his head in his hands. All of us, all of us were thirsting for air, clean air untainted by these vegetable odours and the stink of black flesh.

We moved on with a jerk . . . only for a few yards. It had not been worth getting up for that. And then we set off again for a hundred yards or so. I looked at my compass and found that we were heading due west, whereas the general direction of our march was south. We halted; turned again . . . this time south-east. Then due west again. We were wandering about in the bush as if we had been led by a hoodwinked man. In a little while, I thought, we shall find ourselves under their maxims. Probably we shall walk right into them. And then the

fun will begin. Halting and struggling a few paces forward we spent another hour. Thank God there was no dust: so much, at any rate, we were spared. Several men were sent back to us who had been knocked out by the sun . . . sun and exhaustion, and want of food: it came to the same thing. And still there was no end, nor even the least infinitesimal thinning of the bush: just the eternal thorn of mimosa and acacia, set with brushwood and spearheads of wild sisal below, tangled with fleshy cactus above—scattered here and there with withered candelabra-trees lifting their dry arms above the thorn: over all the closeness of a heavy sky and the unutterable melancholy of the hornbill's hollow note.

But we had not very long to wait now. Somewhere in the thick bush in front of us maxim fire cracked out. The Baluchis had bumped them. We halted, unloaded the panniers. Obviously this was no place for a dressing-station; but it was doubtful if anywhere in this unchanging bush we should find a better. T—— was fit for nothing.

In front the firing increased in violence, its sounds magnified in an extraordinary degree by the echoing bush. Now our machine-guns, too, were in action. And then the wounded began to dribble in, Baluchis all of them; and our stretchers went out for the others who could not walk. Evidently, as usual, when our forces stumbled on a prepared position in the bush—and indeed the first evidence of its existence was generally a burst of maxim fire—they had lost heavily in the first minute. There was no way out of it; these were losses which were inherent in the type of warfare and not to be avoided by any refinements of caution.

Soon I was busy stripping off the field dressings and seeing for myself that the wounds were rightly classified. My *babu*, fat and a trifle deaf, stood near, and hindered rather than helped. The bush seemed hotter than ever. I threw off my tunic and belt, haversack and water-bottle and worked in my shirt sleeves. Two Baluchi subalterns were brought in on the point of death with shattering head wounds. A bloody busi-

ness: strong and fair young bodies both of them. The aromatic air smelt now of iodine and blood.

Indeed it was hot work single-handed; for T—— was as busy as his fever would let him be in getting a shallow trench ready for the seriously wounded, a pit scraped in the crumbling, fibrous ground just deep enough to give them the moral support of a sense of shelter. I worked maybe for an hour, maybe for two. I have said already that we made our dressing-station, as best we might, on the very edge of the track which the Baluchis had trampled in the bush; and now as I worked I had a fugitive vision of many men marching by, scarcely turning to look at me with my bloody arms, the patient figures of the wounded, the more patient shapes of the dead. They swung by unceasingly and their swift, unending progress carried with it a sense of gallantry and inexorable strength. I had not time to watch them or speak with those of them I knew; but very soon I saw the striped brown flashes of the Rhodesian helmets moving past. I could hardly believe it. They must have marched like the devil; for they had started five miles behind us. Nor did they march as tired men. The maxims were rattling in front, and when one goes into battle one does not know fatigue. And thus, while we dressed our wounded, the whole brigade filed past. At any rate we were well protected. But the firing never slackened.

THE DARK RUSSIAN FOREST

FROM

"THE DARK FOREST" BY HUGH WALPOLE

Nikitin disappeared and I was quite alone. I felt terribly desolate. I stood back against the gate of the villa watching soldiers hurry by, seeing high mysterious hedges, the roofs of houses, a line of lighted sky, the tops of trees, all these things rising and falling as the glare in the heavens rose and fell. There was sometimes a terrible noise and sometimes an equally terrible stillness. Somewhere in the darkness a man was groaning, "OH! ah!—Oh! ah!" without cessation. Somewhere the gate of one of the villas swung to and fro, creaking. Sometimes soldiers would stare at my motionless figure and then pass on. All this time, as in one's dreams sometimes one holds off a nightmare, I was keeping my fear at bay. I had now exactly the sensation that I had known so often in my dream, that I was standing somewhere in the dark, that the Enemy was watching me and waiting to spring. But tonight I was only *nearly* afraid. One step on my part, one extra noise, one more flare of light, and I would abandon myself to panic, but, although the perspiration was wet on my forehead, my heart thumping, and my hands dry and hot, I was not yet *quite* afraid.

I had a strange sensation of suffocation, as though I were at the bottom of a well, a well black and damp, with the stars of the sky miles away. There came to me, with a kind of ironic sentimentality, the picture of the drawing-room at home in Polchester, the corner where the piano stood with a palm in an ugly brass pot just behind it, the table near the door with a brass Indian tray and a fat photograph-book with gilt

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clasps, the picture of "Christ being Scourged" above the fireplace, and the green silk screen that stood under the picture in the summer.

A soldier stopped and spoke to me: "Your Honour, it's on the right—the next gate." I followed him without attention, having no doubt but that this was one of our own sanitars, and accompanied a group of soldiers that surrounded a bobbing kitchen on wheels. I was puzzled by the kitchen because I knew that one had not been brought by our Otriad, but I thought that the doctors of the Division had perhaps begged our men to aid the army sanitars.

We hurried through a gate to the right, where in what appeared to be a yard of some kind, the kitchen was established and then, from out of the very earth as it seemed, soldiers appeared, clustering around it with their tin cans. The soldier who was in charge of the party said to me in a confidential whisper. "There's plenty of *Kasha*, your Honour, and the soup will last us, too."

"Very good," said I in a bewildered voice. At the strange accent the soldier looked at me, and then I looked at the soldier. The soldier was a stranger to me (a pleasant round man with a huge smiling mouth and two chins) and I was a stranger to the soldier.

"Well," said the soldier, looking, "I thought . . ."

"I thought ——" said I, most uncomfortable.

The soldiers vanished back into the darkness round the kitchen. Voices, whispering, could be heard.

"Now, that's the end," thought I. "I'm shot as a German spy."

I looked at the soldiers, clustered like bees round the kitchen, then I slipped through the gate into the dark road. I stood there listening. The battle seemed to have drawn away, because I could hear rifles, machine-guns, cannon muffled round a corner of the hill. Here there was now silence, broken only by soldiers who hurried up the road or went in and out at the villa gates. I felt abandoned. How was I to discover Nikitin

again? Before what gate had I stood? I did not know; I seemed to know nothing.

I moved down the road, very miserable and very cold. I had stupidly left my coat in one of the wagons. I walked on, my boots knocking against one another, thinking to myself: "If I'm not given something to do very soon I shall be just as I was the other night at Nijnieff—and then I shall suddenly take to my heels down this road as hard as I can go!"

It was then that I tumbled straight into the arms of Nikitin, who was standing at the edge of the forest watching for me. I was so happy that I felt now afraid of nothing. I held Nikitin's arm, babbling something about kitchens and Germans.

"Well, I don't understand what you say," I remember Nikitin replied; "but you must come and work. There's plenty of it."

We moved to a cottage on the very boundary of the forest, where a little common ran down to the moonlight. Passing through a narrow passage, I entered into a little room with a large white stove. On the top of the stove, under the roof, crouched a boy or a young man with long black hair and a white face. This youth wore what resembled a white shirt over baggy white trousers. His feet were bare and very dirty. Nothing moved except his eyes. He sat there, in exactly that position, all night.

The room was small but was the best that could be obtained. Within the space of ten minutes it became a perfect shambles. The wounded were brought in without pause and under the candlelight Nikitin, two sanitars, and I worked until the sweat ran down our backs and arms in streams. It dripped from my nose, into my mouth, into my eyes. The wounds were horrible. No man seemed to come into the room with an unmangled body. The smell rose higher and higher, the bloody rags lay about the kitchen floor, torn arms, smashed legs, heads with gaping wounds, the pitiful crying and praying, the shrill voices of the delirious. Nikitin, his arms steeped in blood to the elbows, probing, cutting, digging, I myself bandaging until

I did not know what my hands were doing. . . . Then suddenly the battle coming right back to us again, overhead now as it seemed; the cannon shaking three silly staring china dogs on the kitchen dresser, the rifle fire clattering like tumbling crockery about the walls of the cottage—and through it all the white youth, crouched like a ghost on the stove, watching without pause. . . .

"Ah, no, your Honour . . . Ah, no! . . . I can't! I can't! Oh, oh, oh, oh!" and then sobs, the man breaking down like a child, hiding his face in his arms, his wounded leg twitching convulsively. I paused, wiped the sweat from my eyes, stood up. Nikitin looked at me.

"Take some fresh air!" he said. "Go out with the stretcher for half an hour. I can manage here."

I wiped my forehead.

"Sure you can manage?" I asked.

"Quite," said Nikitin. "Here, hold his back! . . . No, *durak*, his back. *Bojé moi*, can't you get your arm under? There—like that. *Horosho, golubchik, horosho* . . . only a minute! There! There!"

I washed my hands and went out. The air caressed my forehead like cold water; from the little garden at the back there came scents of flowers; the moonlight was blue on the common. Eight sanitars were waiting to start. The Feldscher in charge of them did not, I thought, seem greatly pleased when he saw me, but then I am often stupidly sensitive; no one said anything and we started. We carried two stretchers and a soldier from the trenches was with us to guide us.

I could see that the men were not happy. I heard one of them mutter to another that they should not have been sent now; that they should have waited until the attack was over . . . "and the full moon. . . . Did anyone ever see such a moon?"

We came to cross-roads and advanced very carefully.

As we crossed the road I was conscious of great excitement. The noise around us was terrific and different from any noise

that I heard before. I did not think at the time, but was informed afterwards that it was because we were almost directly under a high-wooded cliff (the actual position about whose possession the battle was being fought), that the noise was so tremendous. The echo flung everything back so that each report sounded three or four times. This certainly had the strangest effect—a background as it were of rolling thunder, sometimes distant, sometimes very close and, in front of this, clapping, bellowing, stamping, and then suddenly an absolutely *smashing* effect as though some one cried: "Well, this will settle it!" In quieter intervals one heard the birdlike flight of bullets above one's head and the irritated bad temper of the machine-guns. At every *smashing* noise the sanitars, who were, I believe, schoolmasters and little clerks, and therefore of a more sensitive head than the peasant soldier, ducked their heads, and one fat red-faced man tried to lie down flat on two occasions and was cursed heartily by the Feldscher. I myself felt no fear but only a pounding exhilarating excitement, because I was at last "really in it." We found one wounded man very soon, lying under the hedge with the top of his head gone. Four sanitars (their relief showed very plainly in their faces) returned with him. We advanced again, skirting now a little orchard and keeping always in the shadow under the hedge. Our guide, the soldier, assured us that the wounded man was "very near—quite close." Then we came to a large barn on the edge of what seemed a silver lake but was in reality a long field under the full light of the moon. As we paused I saw, on the further side of the field, two shells burst, very quickly, one after the other.

We all stopped under the shelter of the barn.

"Well," said the Feldscher to the soldier, "where's your man?"

"Only a short way," said the soldier. "Quite close."

"Across that field?" asked the Feldscher, pointing to the moonlight.

"Yes, certainly, " said the soldier.

The Feldscher scratched his head. "We can't go further without orders," he said. "That's very dangerous in front there. I'm responsible for these men. We must return and ask, your Honour," he said, turning to me.

"We shall be nearly an hour returning," I said. "Is your friend badly wounded?" I asked the soldier.

"Very," said he.

"You see . . ." I said to the Feldscher. "We can't possibly leave him like that. It's only a little way."

The Feldscher shook his head. "I can't be responsible. I had my orders to go so far and no further. I must see that my men are safe."

The sanitars who were sitting in a row on their haunches under the shadow of the barn all nodded their heads.

"I didn't know Russians were cowards," I said fiercely.

The Feldscher shook his head quite unmoved: "Your Honour must understand that I had my orders." Then he added slowly: "but of course if your Honour wishes to go yourself . . . I would come with you. The others . . . they must do as they please. They are in their right to return. But I should advise that we return."

"I'm going on," I said.

I must say here that I felt no other sensation than a blind and quite obstinate selfishness. I had no thought of Nikitin or of the sanitars. I did not (and this I must emphasise) think, for a moment, of the wounded man. If the situation had been that by returning I should save many lives and by advancing should save only my own I should still have advanced. If the only hope for the wounded man was my instant speech with Nikitin I would not have gone back to speak with him. I was at this moment neither brave nor fearful. I repeat that I had no sensation except an absolutely selfish obstinate challenge that I, myself, was addressing to Something in space. I was saying: "At last, my chance has come. Now you shall see whether I fly from you or no. *Now* you shall do your worst and fail. I'm the hunter now, not the hunted."

I was conscious of nothing but this quite childish preoccupation with myself. I was, nevertheless, pleased with myself. "There, you see," some one near me seemed to say, "he's not quite so unpractical after all. He's full of common sense." I looked at the row of sanitars squatting on the ground, and felt like a schoolmaster with his children.

"You'd better go home then," I said scornfully. The Feldscher, who was a short stocky man, with a red face and melancholy eyes (something like a prize-fighter turned poet), dismissed them. They went off in a line under the hedge.

The man obviously thought me a tiresome prig. He had no romantic illusions about the business; he had not been a Feldscher during twenty years for nothing and knew that a wound was a wound; when a man was dead he was *dead*.

However . . . "Truly it's not far?" he asked the soldier.

"*Tak totchno*," the man answered, his face quite without expression.

We crossed the moonlit field and for a brief moment silence fell, as though an audience were holding its breath watching us. On the other side were cottages, the outskirts of a tiny village. Here beside these cottages we fell into a fantastic world. That small village must in other times have been a pretty place, nestling with its gardens by the river under the hill. It seemed now to rock and rattle under the noise of the cannon. All the open spaces were like white marble in the moonlight and in these open spaces there was utter silence and emptiness. The place seemed deserted—and yet, in every shadow, in long lines under the cottage wells, in little clumps and clusters round trees or ruins there were eyes staring, the gleam of muskets shone, little specks of light, dancing from wall to wall. Everywhere there were bodies, legs, boots, arms, heads, sudden caps, sudden fingers, sudden hot and streaming breaths. And over everything this infernal noise and yet no human sound. A nightmare of the true nightmare of dreams. The open silver spaces, the little gardens thick with flowers, the high moon and the starry sky, not a living soul to be

seen—and nevertheless watchers everywhere. "Step forward on to that little plot of grass in front of the cottage windows and you're a dead man"—the moonlight said. There were men in the body of the earth, not in trenches, but in holes—my foot stepped on a head of hair and some low voice cursed me. I was, I suppose, by this time, a little delirious with my adventure. I know that I could now distinguish no separate sounds—shells and bullets had vanished and in their stead were whispers and screams and shouts of triumph and bursts of laughter. Songs in chorus, somewhere miners hammering below the earth, somewhere storm at sea with the crash of waves on rocks and the shriek of wind through rigging, somewhere some one who dropped heavy loads of furniture so carelessly that I cursed him—and always these little patches of moonlight, so tempting just because one was forbidden. . . .

We were not popular here. Husky, breathless voices whispered to us "to be away from here, quick. We would draw the fire. What did we want here now?"

"Have you any wounded?" we whispered in return.

"No, no," the answer came. "Keep away from the moonlight." The voices came to us connected sometimes with a nose, an eye, or a leg, often enough out of the heaven itself.

"There's a man wounded behind the next lines," some voice murmured.

We stumbled on and suddenly came to a river with very steep banks and a number of narrow and slender bridges. If this *had* in reality been a nightmare this river could not have obtruded itself more often than it did. We discovered to our dismay that our soldier-guide had disappeared (exactly as in a nightmare he would have done). We crossed the river (bathed of course in moonlight), the plank bridge shaking and quivering beneath us.

We had then a difficult task. Here a row of cottages beneath the very edge of the bank and in the cottage shadow the soldiers were ranged in a long line. Their boots stretched to the verge of the bank, which was slippery and uncertain. We had

to walk on this with our stretchers, stepping between the boots, stumbling often and slipping down towards the water.

"Any wounded?" we whispered again and again.

"No," the whisper came back. "Hasten. . . . Take care of the moonlight."

And then, to my infinite relief and comfort, behind the cottages we found our wounded man. There was a dark yard here, apparently quite deserted. The Feldscher made an exclamation and stepped forward. Three bodies lay together, over one another; two men were dead and cold, the third stirred, very faintly, as we came up, opened his eyes, smiled and said:

"Eh, *Bojé moi* . . . at last!"

As we moved him on to the stretcher, with a little sigh he fainted again. He had a bad stomach-wound. Before picking up the stretcher, the Feldscher wiped his forehead and crossed himself.

"It's a heavy thing for two," he said. "He's a big man," looking at the soldier. There was now somewhere, apparently not very far away, hot rifle fire. The crackle sparkled in the air, as though one were living in a world in which all the electricity was loose. The other firing seemed to have drawn away, and the "Boom—Boom—boom" in front of us was echo from the hill. . . .

We picked up the stretcher and started. It was fortunate for us that we had that difficult bit beside the river at the beginning of our journey. I don't know how we managed it, stepping over the endless rows of legs, with every side step the stretcher lurching over to the left and threatening to pitch us into the river. So slippery too was the ground that our boots refused to grip. The man on the stretcher was dreaming, making a little sound like an unceasing lullaby on two notes—"Na . . . na! Na . . . na! Na . . . na!"

We were compelled to cross the river twice, and the planks bent under our weight until I was assured that they would snap. My arms were beginning to ache and the sweat to

trickle down my spine. My right boot had rubbed my heel. We left the river behind us and then, suddenly, my right hand began to slip off the iron handle of the stretcher.

"We'll have to put it down a moment," I said. We laid it on the ground and at the same instant a bullet sang so close to my ear that I felt it as though an insect had bitten me. Then a shell, exploding, as it seemed to us, amongst the very cottages where we had just been, startled us.

"We saved our man," said the Feldscher, looking at the soldier, "but we'd better move on. It's uncomfortable here."

We picked the thing up and started again, and at once my hand began to slip away from its hold (nightmare sensation exactly). I bent my head down, managed to lick my hand without raising it, and stiffened the muscles of my arm. We were watched, once more, by a million eyes—again I stepped on a head of hair buried somewhere in the ground. Then some voice cried shrilly: "Ah! Ah!" . . . some man hit.

Every bone in my body began to ache. I was, of course, rottenly trained, without a sound muscle in my body, and my legs threatened cramp, my heel grated against my boot and sent a stab to my stomach with every movement, my shoulders seemed to pull away from the stretcher as though they would separately rebel against my orders . . . and my hand began again to slip. The Feldscher also began to feel the strain. Once he asked me to stop. He apologized; I could see the sweat pouring down his face: "A very big man," he said.

Whether it were the echo, whether my ears had by this time been utterly deafened and confused I do not know, but now the shock and rumble of the cannon seemed to come directly from under my feet. I felt perhaps as though I were on one of those railways that I have seen in London at a fair when the ground shakes and quivers beneath you. It really would not have surprised me had the earth suddenly yawned and swallowed me. Every plague now beset me. My hand refused to hold the stretcher, my body was wet with perspiration, my face was for some reason covered with mud. . . . There was

a snap and my braces burst. My belt was loose and my trousers, as though they had waited for their opportunity, slipped down over my knees. I felt the cold night wind on my flesh. Neither decency nor comfort mattered to me now—I would have walked gladly naked through the world. The Feldscher was making a grinding noise between his teeth. I was no longer conscious of shell or bullets. I heard no noise. I was aware of neither light nor darkness. I could not have told my name had any one asked me it. I did not recognise trees nor houses, nor was I at all aware that with a muddy face and my trousers down to my knees I was a strange figure. I was aware of one thing only—that I must keep my right hand on the stretcher. My left behaved decently enough, but my right was a rebel. I felt a personal fury against it, as though I said to it: “Ah! but I’ll punish you when I get back!” I with all my mental consciousness “willed” it to remain on the handle. It slipped. I drove it back. It slipped further, it was almost gone. . . . With a supreme effort I drove it back again. “I *will* fall off,” said my hand. “You shall *not*,” said I. “I have!” cried my hand triumphantly. “Back!” I swore, driving it.

We were now, I believe, both stumbling along, the wounded man pitching from side to side. Of the rest of our journey I have the most confused memory. The firing had no longer any effect upon me. I was thinking of my rebellious hand, my aching heel, and the irritation of my trousers clustered about my legs. “Another step and I shall fall!” I thought. . . . “I shall sleep.” I heard, from a great distance as it seemed, the soldier’s “Na . . . Na! Na . . . na!” I replied to him as a nurse to her child. “Na . . . na! Na . . . na!” . . . Then I heard Nikitin’s voice. . . .

Half an hour after my adventure I was watching the dawn flood the sky from the little garden at the back of the cottage. It seemed that those stretchers are really heavy things for any two men to carry. . . . We had been three hours on our journey!

Well—I sat in the garden watching the sun rise. To my right

were four dead men neatly laid out in a row under a tree. Their faces had not been covered but their eyes were closed, their cheeks, hands, and feet like wax. In front of them the young man who had sat on the stove in the kitchen all night and watched us at work was mowing the tall grass with a scythe. He was going to dig graves. He wore a white shirt and white trousers and had long black hair.

"Why didn't they take you for a soldier?" I asked him.

"Consumptive," he said.

I had washed my face, hitched up my trousers. I sat on the trunk of a tree, watched the dew on the grass and the faint blue like the colour of a bird's egg flood the sky, staining it pale yellow. All firing had utterly ceased. There was not a sound except the birds in the trees who were beginning to sing. A soldier, a fine grave figure with a black beard, was washing in a little pool at the end of the garden. He was naked save for his white drawers. There was, I repeat, not a sound. Our cottage looked so peaceful—smoke coming from the chimney. No sign of the shambles, no sign except the four dead men, all so grave and quiet. The blue in the sky grew deeper. Then the sun rose, a jolly gold ball with red clouds swinging in streamers away from it.

The birds sang above my head so loudly that the boy who was mowing looked up at them. The soldier finished his washing, put on his shirt. He was a Mahommedan, I perceived, because he prayed, very solemnly, his face to the sun, bowing to the ground. The grass fell before the flashing scythe, the sun flamed behind the trees, and I was happy as I had never known happiness in my life before.

I had done only what all the soldiers are doing every day of their lives. I had been only where they always were. . . . But I felt that I need never be afraid again. Every one knows how an early summer morning can give one confidence; in my happiness, God forgive me, I thought that my struggles were at an end, that I had met my enemy and defeated him . . . that I was worthy and able to defend Marie.

These things may seem foolish now when one knows what followed them, but the happiness of that morning at least was real. Perhaps all over Europe there were men, at that moment, happy as I was, because they had proved something to themselves. Then Nikitin called to me, laughing.

"Tea, 'Mr.' and *bulki* (white bread) and sausage?"

"All right, I'm coming," I answered. "Listen, *golubchik*," I called to the soldier. "Bring me some water in your kettle. I'll wash my hands."

He came, smiling, towards me.

I have given the incidents of this night in great detail for my own satisfaction, because I wish to forget nothing. To others the little adventure must seem trivial, but to myself it represented the climax of a chain of events.

THE MADONNA OF SENTRY PASS

FROM

"SNOW AND STEEL" BY GIROLAMO SOMMI-PICENARDI

(Translated by Rudolph Altrocchi)

This is the Valley of the Padola, the most northern stretch of Italy, which opens wide to the enemy the gate of the Alps. The fir trees bend low, heavy with ice, and mingle their ashen gray with the white of the snow fields. The villages are buried in about two yards of snow, and their window panes sparkle in the lazy winter sun. On one side are the undulating slopes of Colle Spina, Colle Rosson, Quartena, which look like graceful pyramids all transparent with light and with purple shades. On the other side the Fosca Ararnola, the Croda d'Ambata and Mount Popera, with its crests as jagged as the edge of a saw. At the very bottom Point Eleven and the great fan of Croda Rossa, which seems held by an invisible hand. Between these two sides, so different, is the Pass, where a hill, which has usurped a name not its own, marks the frontier. It is Monte Croce. Up there a drop of rain is divided and gives half of its water to the Black Sea and half of it to the Adriatic. As one advances towards the bottom of the valley, the depth of the landscape increases; that chain of dominating rocks flees farther away and there rise before it a hundred sharp and impervious pinnacles which, little by little, hide it entirely. It is the usual mountain mirage, which seems to recede and change aspect at every step. Between Point Eleven and Croda Rossa there is a little Fork in the shape of a V. That is Sentry Pass. They call it that because a little column of rocks on the right of it looks like a soldier doing sentry duty, and beneath, the Fork runs

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steep and bare a deep valley full of landslides and snow. The ascent of it extremely difficult.

When the war broke out, the Fifth Company, Val Piave Battalion, occupied, with a patrol, the summit of Mount Popera, and every day the Alpini climbed to the top of Sentry Pass. Everything was quiet up there. Who could possibly have taken that eagle's nest? In the meantime the heavy artillery climbed up the roads of the Cadore with its small trains of motors.

On the morning of the fifteenth of June our soldiers returned to the Pass, but were received by Austrian machine guns. The Post was lost and winter was coming on. Three bloody attempts to recapture the Sentry failed, and so the enemy obtained a window from which to look into our house.

One fine winter morning, in one of those clear days which are not rare in the mountains, a Captain of the Alpini was seated on the crest of Mount Popera, talking with a military Chaplain. The former had a virile face, a simple and resolute expression, blue eyes and a broad forehead; the other was a good country priest; a very expert mountaineer, with a good, round and smiling face. Although fifty years old, he had not wanted to leave his parishioners and had followed them with the Cadore battalion. He had not missed a single action in which his soldiers had taken part, and he had comforted them with his moral help and with his example as patriot and soldier. Most of those excellent Alpini had been born in his very parish of Vorca, and he had taught them, with the catechism, to be good Italians.

The priest and the Captain were inseparable; one filled with religious mysticism, the other a free thinker. In spite of their difference in age they were bound by an almost brotherly affection.

"You look, too," said the Captain, passing the field glasses to Father Giovanni. "Don't you think it was a mad thing to attempt those three attacks last fall up the Big Valley to take possession of the Pass? It is from the Ridge," he continued,

with great conviction, "that one ought to pass." And with his finger he traced the entire jagged line of Point Eleven.

"From up there?" asked the priest. "Up that sharp crest?" and he shook his head. "It seems to me rather a serious undertaking."

The two men looked at one another.

"Not for us," he added, "but for the soldiers. We would have to have expert mountaineers."

"Where I can pass," answered the Captain, sharply and resolutely, as he had unlimited faith in his men, "where I can pass, my soldiers can pass too."

The Chaplain took the field glasses again and looked through them at length.

"If you say so. From Mount Popera one would have to scale the top of Point Eleven, following the crest, descend down the Valley, then up again, climb up the sides through very narrow passages. There is no denying the difficulty of such an enterprise. It would take two months."

"Certainly," added the Captain. "One would have to take up there all that is necessary; rope ladders, provisions, ammunition, and all this across narrow channels, barely accessible, go up by dint of ladders and spikes driven right into the rock."

They arose and began to descend the mountain. The sun was setting.

"If the General approves of your project, remember that I want to come with you," added the priest. "I am counting on it."

That very evening the General ordered a report from the Captain, who expressed himself approximately as follows: "Sir, I believe it is a mistake to insist on a frontal attack. Not a soldier would endure such an attack in the open. One machine gun would be enough to hold back an entire brigade. The solution of the problem is not in that direction," and pointing to the map, which was stretched out on the table, he continued, "but in this," and his finger stopped on the very point which marked Mount Popera. "It is from here that we must start, from Point 2996, then advance on the crests, climb up and

down twenty or more peaks and as many ravines, and arrive thus, unsuspected, upon the Pass. From there we can fall upon the enemy and take the position by storm. It is a very simple thing indeed, which can be done with very few losses, and with very few men."

The General looked at him. "So you think this is a perfectly easy operation? You know perfectly well that last October we tried the attack, but that the difficulties were insurmountable."

"Sir, there is nothing insurmountable about this, it is a question of method."

"Remember that this is winter."

"Yes, sir, but this is the most favorable season in which not to be seen. In such operations one must count on the storm, on bad weather. I need trained men, and I have them."

The General kept looking at the map.

"If, sir, you have confidence in me, do not be troubled by the difficulties. I only ask for two hundred men with whom to establish a base up there, and among these I will choose fifty for the final undertaking. As sure as I am a pure-blooded mountaineer and as obstinate as a mule, I guarantee to place Sentry Pass in your possession by the middle of April."

The General looked at him very seriously. Then he lowered his eyes again on the map. "We will talk it over again tomorrow," he said.

And on the morrow the thing was decided.

A few days later Father Giovanni received orders to join the Captain, who was already on Mount Popera, gathering his materials for the undertaking.

On the morning of his departure Father Giovanni had gone to celebrate Mass at the Parish of Candide. In this Church, at the very bottom of the right nave, there was an altar especially venerated by the people for its image of a Madonna. It was a mediocre work of art, but the expression of the Virgin and of the Child was full of delightful naïveté. Beneath the image was written:

"Virgo vigilans ora pro nobis."

All around there were many burning candles and offerings, in witness of the favours granted by the Madonna. Father Giovanni had wanted to celebrate his last Mass at the feet of this Madonna, and in the tremulous light of the tapers it had seemed to him that the Madonna had smiled upon him beneath the dark incrustations of time. He made a vow to consecrate Sentry Pass to Her, if, through Her intercession, the difficult undertaking should succeed.

"In nomine patris et filii et spiritui sancti."

He looked upon the people crowded in the naves, blessed them, and went into the sacristy to remove his vestments.

On Mount Popera the Captain was waiting for him. One reached the summit through a narrow valley by a very steep ascent of about a hundred yards, going up almost vertically, and on which had been stretched rope ladders. On this spot was heaped a good share of the materials, and an old shed leaning against a ledge overlooking the precipice served as a shelter for fifty men. From Mount Popera one had to climb down upon a very dangerous crest in order to reach the first slopes of Point Eleven, at most five hundred yards away. The two friends went to the farthest edge of Mount Popera to study which way should be chosen. From that balcony, at a height of nine thousand feet above sea level, Point Eleven could be dominated almost entirely. Seen from that point the mountain seemed small, hiding, as it did, most of its length, and arising isolated in its characteristic shape of a cone, split into a thousand irregular and pointed pinnacles. These pinnacles were massed one on top of another, and imbedded in an inextricable labyrinth of narrow ravines and bristling crags.

Before such a terrain other men would have felt discouraged. It was a pretty difficult affair. They had to thrust themselves into this maze of rocks, climb up on almost vertical crags, cling to cliffs which had no footings, go beyond them to ridges as narrow as a man's foot, and proceed north through continuous descents and ascents. And upon this road they would

have to take the men, materials, sheds, provisions, ammunition, tools, all over abysses three hundred yards deep in the darkness of the night, in the howling of the tempest, in order not to be seen!

The Captain was like those blades of Toledo, tempered in oil, which bend to the hilt without breaking. He knew how to meet all contingencies without ever being discouraged. The priest and the soldier studied the mountain, made their plans, and chose the point which seemed to them least difficult to scale. At the foot of a huge rock they chose a place where, as soon as possible, should be brought the materials for a shed, from which they would attack the mountain. On the right and on the left there unfolded beneath their eyes the marvellous panorama of the Valleys of the Padola and of Boden. An icy breeze cut their faces, and the wind raised a snow flurry which made their eyes water.

About the first of February the shed and all the materials were ready under the great cliff of Point Eleven. They had left in the old shelter of Mount Popera, appropriately enlarged, a hundred and fifty men. There they would be safe from avalanches. In the camp of Point Eleven they kept only fifty men, but the very best. From that point the expedition was to start.

First of all they occupied two small crests, not far from the base, from which one could see the Valley of the Sentry. On each of them they placed four men on guard, and a telephone, and left very severe orders for the men not to thrust their heads beyond the crest, in order not to be seen by the enemy. It was forbidden to light a fire, to throw any object over, on the side of the valley; white uniforms were prescribed, and small holes were made in the snow from which the enemy could be watched on Sentry Pass.

About the middle of February the Captain and the priest made their start. It was a moonlit night, one of those resplendent nights in which the snow reflects vivid blue lights, and the rock seems to be iridescent as mother-of-pearl. The cold was intense. The two chiefs, tied to each other and to four men,

cut the first step in the ice. The rock was covered with a layer of snow as hard as crystal, but fragile under the blows of the pick. A thousand sparks flew forth at every blow of steel; the steps followed each other in the snow, or in the ice; spikes were driven in the crags, and sections of ladders were attached. Slowly they progressed, making use of every projection, every footing.

After two hours of fatiguing labour, they had climbed up almost a hundred yards, and it looked as if there were, near that place, a big channel which could be used to climb up to another summit not far off. But mountains are always deceitful. Just at the moment in which they thought they had reached the channel, they found themselves before a vertical crack about fifty yards deep, and into which they were obliged to descend. How much faith is necessary not to be overtaken by discouragement!

The Captain smiled. He expected an obstacle; in fact, he had been surprised not to have found one sooner. They threw down a rope, and Father Giovanni, in spite of his fifty years, descended to the bottom. He looked around, got his bearings, and then had himself pulled up.

"The path is fine," he reported, "but for the moment we have to stop here. We need about fifty yards of rope ladders, and we will bring them along tomorrow."

The next day the rope was hanging from the cliff and the men went down the swinging ladders which they tried to make steady with ropes fastened to the walls of rock. Afterwards they had to carry into that chasm all the materials necessary to begin the ascent all over again. An enormous task. This channel was just a vertical crack, barely a yard wide, and went up almost to the very top, in a slope that in some places was almost vertical.

Those who have no idea of this kind of climbing may think of a chimney sweep who climbs by dint of elbows and knees; only in the channel there are no projecting bricks as in a chimney, and one has to climb up, holding on to the jutties of

the rocks, if there are any, or, if not, drive spikes and tie ropes to them. Often a man must climb upon the shoulders of another, and sometimes a third one on the shoulders of the second in order to reach a point of vantage. Certainly there is, however, a great advantage. The mountain chimney is different from the home chimney in that it has no soot!

After two days, those six men, with their bodies covered with bruises, with the marks of iron on their shoulders and their hands raw, reached the top. But up there another disappointment awaited them. Beyond the point there was another still higher, which hid completely the horizon towards the north. One could see, however, the Altenstein from up there, the summit of the Three Shoemakers, the Imer Gsell, the Sextenstein Rock, the Paterno, the tops of Lavaredo, and towards the north, not completely hidden, the Great Vetta d'Italia, our craved frontier.

"Look," said Father Giovanni, touching the Captain's shoulder, and pointing towards the west; "look at the Antelao."

The Captain turned around and looked. His eyes were full of tears. Was it the sharp cold and wind which blew into his eyes? Or the smile of the mountain which had seen his birth? He was born at Borca, between Pelmo and Antelao.

*Pelmo thereat and Antelao loosen from the white
clouds their gray heads in the air,
Like old giants who shaking their shaggy hel-
mets look upon the battle.*

Where is the mountaineer, no matter how tempered to the fatigue of the mountains and accustomed to the howling of the tempest which crunches the rocks, who would not be stirred in looking at the far-off summit which shadows his native hearth?

I happen to have in my hands a fragment of the Captain's diary, and although it may seem tactless toward the unknown protagonist of this story to transcribe it, I feel that I am already forgiven if I am driven to do so by the deep love which

guides me, and by the desire to give to the reader sensations more vivid and clear. I shall transcribe, therefore, a few crumpled sheets, without adding or removing a single syllable.

February 18th.

I had them place from this point, that is, from the little Fork (to which I have given the name of Forcella Alta), a telephone wire which will connect it to the base. Will this wire resist the fury of the snow and wind? I stretched it in a rough way along the path which we took, but later I shall have it fastened to the rock.

The channel is really horrible; in certain points it isn't two feet wide. However, one can climb fairly easily. But how shall I have all the materials carried up here? I do not know, but they will have to come. Up to this time I have needed two thousand yards of rope, and I need as many more, if the difficulties that await me are anything like these, and I have no reason to think that they are not. Who knows what faces they will make down there at headquarters?

I am leaving in this Fork three men, and three days' provisions. They are soldiers accustomed to the cold, and will burrow a hole in the snow. Within three days I hope to bring them a portable shed. I gave orders that they should not move at any cost. Tonight I am going to Point 2992 to request the transportation of the materials which were left at Giralba Fork.

February 19th.

Suddenly the weather has changed. Outside the storm is howling. Several avalanches have fallen and a foot and a half of fresh snow. The snow in the channel broke the telephone wire. That is a very serious thing. Even the telephone wire that connected me to Giralba was broken. Bad luck! I am isolated from the world and from my advanced posts. I cleared the path which leads to the base at Point Eleven. What a job: it took three hours. But I carried there all the wood at my disposal.

February 20th.

Tried to reach my three men at Forcella Alta, but failed. The channel is choked with snow, and I must give up reaching it. The weather is getting worse. What about my three men?

February 21st.

It snowed all night; the wind is so strong that it is almost impossible to stand up outside. For two days we have been isolated from Giralba. This thing is beginning to worry me. Father Giovanni, who is always hopeful, even when it snows, and sees everything in a rosy light, even when the sky is gray, tells me that this thing does not make the slightest impression upon him and that the men up there at Forcella Alta will get along perfectly well. I am not as optimistic as that. Father Giovanni is admirable. Until the day after tomorrow my men will have provisions, but after that—what? This thought worries me. Tomorrow morning at all costs I want to reach Forcella Alta.

February 22nd.

Yesterday I made a desperate attempt to reach Forcella Alta. The snow has entirely filled the channel, and while we were climbing the gorge large masses of snow and of ice broke loose and fell upon us. It is a real miracle that I and the three men who were with me were not hurled to the bottom of the valley—a jump of three hundred yards.

I shot off my rifle; we called; made all sorts of loud noises, but everything was useless; the howl of the storm covered every sound. Under such conditions, with death in my very soul, I had to give up the enterprise. And yet those boys could so easily let themselves down the big channel. Their very weight would open a path for them, but I am afraid they won't move. It was I who gave them the order not to leave that spot at any cost, so I sentenced them to death. It keeps on snowing. This is desperate! The men are bottled up in that shed; Father Giovanni tries to keep them cheerful, but if they only knew my worry!

February 24th.

What an awful night. The third since this hell broke loose. The shed is supported by a ledge right over the precipice. At first I had fastened it with ropes, but now it is beginning to move tremendously, because I needed the ropes up there several days ago. Every now and then it seems as if the wind lifted it and carried it to the very bottom of the precipice. Will its own weight be more powerful or the strength of the wind? No connection at all with Giralba. No news at all of my men at Forcella Alta. It seems impossible, but the weather is getting worse all the time. The wind beats on the boards of the shed with hammer-like blows. The noise is deafening. We are stretched out on our sacks. What else can we do? But it is horrible to think of flying four hundred yards to the bottom of the ravine and in the very hands of the Austrians. Everybody pretends to sleep, but nobody really sleeps. If anybody attempts a joke, there is even somebody to smile.

Even Father Giovanni has left me. He went to the base of Point Eleven this evening and the men feel his absence.

February 25th.

The weather is improving. Is it the light that gives me this sensation? It is extraordinary how darkness makes a situation tragical. I went to the shed of Point Eleven, and I ordered carried there the last pieces of fire wood. For four days I have had no news from the Valley. We can see nothing; everything is gray. Oh, this eternal whirling of snow! With great difficulty I went to the base of Point Eleven. I am very much troubled. I don't know what to do. I went around this place for two hours not knowing whether to return to Mount Popera or to stay.

All of a sudden I saw four shadows appear through the storm. I rubbed my eyes. Was it a dream? Thank God! It was the Chaplain with my three men of Forcella Alta who were coming toward me.

One of them said to me: "Pardon me, Captain, we didn't have anything more to eat, so we came to get something, see-

ing that nobody brought us any. But we are going right back, if necessary."

I felt like embracing them. I ordered them to go to Point 2992 and rest.

February 26th.

Decidedly, things are going better. I was mostly worried about the three men at Forcella Alta. The sky has cleared a little, so I can just see for a moment Forcella Giralba, and speak with that post by means of the heliograph. They tell me that avalanches have stopped up the road for the carriers. This is a nuisance, but today I feel optimistic.

February 27th.

I have almost no more wood to burn. I am using all the remnants of boards used for the shed, and I even burned some of the superfluous parts of the sides and of a little outshed which I had as an office. Now we are all sleeping together in the same place. It is not pleasant. A hundred and fifty men in a little closed place exhale nauseating odors. The place is full of insects. Patience. There are hardly any more matches. The storm has begun again and we are snowed in. I have lots of cheese and biscuits. We certainly shall not starve to death, but we are extremely thirsty and there is very little water because to melt the snow it takes wood, and the wood is reduced to nothing.

What a sad day! How long the hours are. An engineer keeps my men cheerful and vies with Father Giovanni in telling stories. Soldiers are like children, it takes very little to amuse them. A little while ago that soldier was telling of a trumpeter of his regiment who was sounding taps while chewing tobacco. All of a sudden the wad of tobacco got into the trumpet. . . . All the soldiers burst with laughter. My worries prevented my getting the end of the story.

February 29th.

We light a fire only in the morning to warm the coffee. This coffee has become so pale and so insipid that I complained to Father Giovanni, who is the general manager of the expedition.

Then he confessed to me with a mysterious air, as if he were very proud of his invention, that for three days we've been cooking the grounds left over during the last week.

March 3rd.

For three days I have not written a line. Everything is black as ink, and Forcella Giralba gives no sign of life. Is it possible that we have been forgotten? How we have cursed, during all these days, the Commissary Department. Provisions are getting low; there is almost no more wood, and we have no more matches. I made use of the candles, of which we have a lot. I keep two lighted night and day and one of the soldiers does Vestal service.

March 4th.

This has been the worst night of all. The wind was just like a hurricane. I thought it was all over and that we were going to be hurled into the abyss. The shed made such a lurch that we all awoke. It moved about a foot toward the precipice. In this displacement the rear of the house opened up and our home is full of snow. Fortunately about dawn the wind toned down.

March 7th.

Yesterday morning, after having consulted Father Giovanni, whom I left in command of the expedition, with instructions for an advance, I decided to go down to Giralba and to Auronzo to ask those gentlemen at headquarters if they had really decided to let us all starve to death. This has been the most active day of my whole life. Taking advantage of a rift in the weather, and accompanied by three soldiers, I climbed down the big cliff. It is a very difficult descent because everything is covered with a layer of ice. We had to use the ropes because the steps were all impracticable. I crossed the Valley on the north side, to be as far as possible from avalanches, and went up as high as Forcella. We put on snowshoes in order to cross the valley more quickly. That is the dangerous point. If an avalanche had come down, good-bye for my expedition!

It was awfully hard work to make any headway, in spite

of the snowshoes, for we went down into the snow up to our waists. A corporal led the way, gliding along like a man who is swimming, to break through. I wanted to try this form of exercise too, and changed off with him, but I could stand it only for five minutes, it was so tiring. This corporal is one of the toughest men I ever saw. The crossing of the Valley was a solemn affair. We were tied to one another, twenty yards apart, and tried to walk as fast as possible through the critical zone. Luck was with us. A big avalanche crossed our path just after we had passed, and another one, a small one, came down just ahead of us, without touching us.

I think I have beaten all records for speed in crossing the Valley in twenty minutes, through soft snow a yard deep. How good it was to be on solid land again.

I am leaving at the Forcella Giralba two men with orders to accompany immediately a supply train to Mount Popera, and I am going down to Auronzo. With a pair of skis I started down the Giralba Valley, going over ravines, over avalanches, avoiding with remarkable luck a mass of obstacles. Before night I reached the high road, where I found a column of sleighs which took me to Auronzo. I was on my feet for ten hours, in the snow, in a continuous nervous tension. This has been so far as I can remember the hardest day of my life.

March 19th.

Father Giovanni is a man full of surprises, or rather a man of miracles. After I had spent twelve days at the various headquarters and at the Commissary Department, and had arranged everything for the accomplishment of our enterprise, returning to Mount Popera, my good friend the Chaplain announced that the road was completely cleared as far as Sentry Pass. This was incredible, almost miraculous. How much energy, how much activity there is in this man of fifty.

We can now count our days to the end. I think that by the first of April we can attempt to occupy the Pass. I am writing tonight to the General in command of this sector to inform him that within fifteen days at most, according to plans, ma-

chine guns, bomb throwers, provisions, men and ammunition will be ready . . . if the weather keeps good.

Here the diary ended.

During the absence of the Captain no time had been lost. Father Giovanni had found the way of climbing down at night from Forcella Alta upon the enemy's side; he had walked along an extremely steep ridge, and had found a place appropriate for climbing up, right above Sentry Pass. He had even found a most convenient place from which to let himself down by surprise upon the Austrian position on the day of action.

But what a path! To climb down from Forcella three hundred yards on a rope ladder in sight of the enemy and walk along the ridge at night. It was necessary to cross that tract of about five hundred yards in utter darkness or in the mist, in order to give no suspicion to the enemy, and every night it was necessary to erase the footprints, and draw up the ladders. To have an idea of the work accomplished, one should remember that with all those difficulties, and working only at night, there had been brought to this high point about eight tons of material. Up there, right below the extreme top, had been found, fortunately, a splendid channel of about four hundred yards, through which to carry the machine guns, the bomb throwers, and all provisions necessary for fifty men.

The Captain could not understand how, in less than ten days, it had been possible to accomplish all this.

"Do you know how many trips I have made this last week?" asked the Chaplain. "A hundred and twenty. And when you get up there you will understand what that means."

At the top of the channel they had put up a shed for fifty men. Just at that moment they were putting on the roof. The two officers peeped beyond the last Fork to see the Austrians below. Two hundred yards below, in straight vertical line, they could see the Austrian defenses, the barbed wire entanglements, the casemates. A few Austrian soldiers, lying in the sun, were cutting the tops of their bullets with their knives. The

rascals. Two men were called to witness the fact and a report was made.

About the first of April all arrangements for the attack had been completed. Machine guns, bomb throwers and cannons were in position. They were arranging the telephone wire from a point on the crest of Mount Popera to the bottom of the valley to make connections with the troops which would later take part in the action.

A comical thing then happened that might have become tragical. A lieutenant of the Telegraph Corps, who was preparing the wire, upon stepping across to the edge, put his foot on a ridge of snow. All of a sudden it became detached and began to slip down the steep slope towards the bottom of the valley. But the lieutenant, perhaps involuntarily, held on to the roll of wire, about five hundred yards long, one end of which was already fastened to the rock, and so it happened that a small avalanche was formed which gracefully carried to the bottom of the valley telephone operator and all—a flight of three hundred yards in ten seconds. The Austrians saw in this nothing but a chance avalanche; and we thus established at once communications with the Valley.

On the fifth of April the Captain was able to speak directly with the General and complete final arrangements. The operation was to take place as follows: They would thrust two companies right up to the cliffs of Sentry Pass at night, to support the principal action in case of failure, while the Captain of the Forcella would fall on the enemy by surprise. The operation was irrevocably settled for the fourteenth of April. Father Giovanni insisted on that date, which was the feast of the Madonna of Candide, for the soldiers wanted to celebrate that feast with a victory. The hour agreed upon was nine o'clock. That is the very hour in which the enemy had mess.

That morning reveille was sounded early. One saw from the observatory, reaching up from the bottom of the valley, our detachments destined for reinforcements. Everything was ready; they awaited the signal. And Father Giovanni that

morning, in a little niche of the rocks, surrounded by ice, celebrated Mass and blessed the soldiers.

"Courage, boys," he said, "The Virgin of Candide looks upon us and . . . *Avanti Savoia*."

Precisely at nine the first cannon was fired. At nine-twenty the signal was given. Quick as an avalanche those fifty men, with their officers and their Chaplain at the head, with their guns on their shoulders, rushed down. The slope was steep. A little avalanche carried that group of valiant men down with such lightning speed that the position was taken without resistance, and at exactly ten o'clock Sentry Pass was in our possession. This action had cost only three wounded and a few bruised. Yet this operation, which may seem modest, was one of the most important accomplished by the Fourth Army, and gave us complete possession of the Valley on the Austrian side, while it freed the whole Valley of Padola from the threat of Austrian observation, from which the enemy had gauged their fire on our columns for many months.

Thus fell into our hands the most northern point of Italy. It was the fourteenth of April. Down there, at the bottom of the Valley of Sexton, one could see a train fleeing rapidly toward the east. It was the train for Vienna. In all our soldiers there remained the sure conviction that that bold stroke which succeeded without any losses, had something miraculous about it, and was due to the evident intervention of the Madonna of Candide. The vow of Father Giovanni was fulfilled.

Toward the end of August they raised up there a statue of bronze which reproduced the image of the Virgin. It is still up there, on the great rocky cliff which looks on the enemy and lifts its arms to the sky. Below the statue are carved these words:

Virgo vigilans ora pro nobis.

And when the soldier mounts guard at its feet, he repeats these words in a loud voice, and believes himself invulnerable.

THE RETREAT FROM THE ISONZO

FROM

"A FAREWELL TO ARMS" BY ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Later we were on a road that led to a river. There was a long line of abandoned trucks and carts on the road leading up to the bridge. No one was in sight. The river was high and the bridge had been blown up in the centre; the stone arch was fallen into the river and the brown water was going over it. We went on up the bank looking for a place to cross. Up ahead I knew there was a railway bridge and I thought we might be able to get across there. The path was wet and muddy. We did not see any troops; only abandoned trucks and stores. Along the river bank there was nothing and no one but the wet brush and muddy ground. We went up to the bank and finally we saw the railway bridge.

"What a beautiful bridge," Aymo said. It was a long plain iron bridge, across what was usually a dry river-bed.

"We better hurry and get across before they blow it up," I said.

"There's nobody to blow it up," Piani said. "They're all gone."

"It's probably mined," Bonello said. "You cross first, Tenente."

"Listen to the anarchist," Aymo said. "Make him go first."

"I'll go," I said. "It won't be mined to blow up with one man."

"You see," Piani said. "That is brains. Why haven't you brains, anarchist?"

"If I had brains I wouldn't be here," Bonello said.

"That's pretty good, Tenente," Aymo said.

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"That's pretty good," I said. We were close to the bridge now. The sky had clouded over again and it was raining a little. The bridge looked long and solid. We climbed up the embankment.

"Come one at a time," I said and started across the bridge. I watched the ties and the rails for any trip-wires or signs of explosive but I saw nothing. Down below the gaps in the ties the river ran muddy and fast. Ahead across the wet countryside I could see Udine in the rain. Across the bridge I looked back. Just up the river was another bridge. As I watched, a yellow mud-coloured motor car crossed it. The sides of the bridge were high and the body of the car, once on, was out of sight. But I saw the heads of the driver, the man on the seat with him, and the two men on the rear seat. They all wore German helmets. Then the car was over the bridge and out of sight behind the trees and the abandoned vehicles on the road. I waved to Aymo who was crossing and to the others to come on. I climbed down and crouched beside the railway embankment. Aymo came down with me.

"Did you see the car?" I asked.

"No. We were watching you."

"A German staff car crossed on the upper bridge."

"A staff car?"

"Yes."

"Holy Mary."

The others came and we all crouched in the mud behind the embankment, looking across the rails at the bridge, the line of trees, the ditch and the road.

"Do you think we're cut off then, Tenente?"

"I don't know. All I know is a German staff car went along that road."

"You don't feel funny, Tenente? You haven't got strange feelings in the head?"

"Don't be funny, Bonello."

"What about a drink?" Piani asked. "If we're cut off we

might as well have a drink." He unhooked his canteen and uncorked it.

"Look! Look!" Aymo said and pointed toward the road. Along the top of the stone bridge we could see German helmets moving. They were bent forward and moved smoothly, almost supernaturally, along. As they came off the bridge we saw them. They were bicycle troops. I saw the faces of the first two. They were ruddy and healthy-looking. Their helmets came low down over their foreheads and the side of their faces. Their carbines were clipped to the frame of the bicycles. Stick bombs hung handle down from their belts. Their helmets and their gray uniforms were wet and they rode easily, looking ahead and to both sides. There were two—then four in line, then two, then almost a dozen; then another dozen—then one alone. They did not talk but we could not have heard them because of the noise from the river. They were gone out of sight up the road.

"Holy Mary," Aymo said.

"They were Germans," Piani said. "Those weren't Austrians."

"Why isn't there somebody here to stop them?" I said. "Why haven't they blown the bridge up? Why aren't there machine-guns along this embankment?"

"You tell us, Tenente," Bonello said.

I was very angry.

"The whole bloody thing is crazy. Down below they blow up a little bridge. Here they leave a bridge on the main road. Where is everybody? Don't they try and stop them at all?"

"You tell us, Tenente," Bonello said. I shut up. It was none of my business; all I had to do was to get to Pordenone with three ambulances. I had failed at that. All I had to do now was to get to Pordenone. I probably could not even get to Udine. The hell I couldn't. The thing to do was to be calm and not get shot or captured.

"Didn't you have a canteen open?" I asked Piani. He handed it to me. I took a long drink. "We might as well start," I said.

"There's no hurry though. Do you want to eat something?"

"This is no place to stay," Bonello said.

"All right. We'll start."

"Should we keep on this side—out of sight?"

"We'll be better off on top. They may come along this bridge too. We don't want them on top of us before we see them."

We walked along the railroad track. On both sides of us stretched the wet plain. Ahead across the plain was the hill of Udine. The roofs fell away from the castle on the hill. We could see the campanile and the clock-tower. There were many mulberry trees in the fields. Ahead I saw a place where the rails were torn up. The ties had been dug out too and thrown down the embankment.

"Down! down!" Aymo said. We dropped down beside the embankment. There was another group of bicyclists passing along the road. I looked over the edge and saw them go on.

"They saw us but they went on," Aymo said.

"We'll get killed up there, Tenente," Bonello said.

"They don't want us," I said. "They're after something else. We're in more danger if they should come on us suddenly."

"I'd rather walk here out of sight," Bonello said.

"All right. We'll walk along the tracks."

"Do you think we can get through?" Aymo asked.

"Sure. There aren't very many of them yet. We'll go through in the dark."

"What was that staff car doing?"

"Christ knows," I said. We kept on up the tracks. Bonello tired of walking in the mud of the embankment and came up with the rest of us. The railway moved south away from the highway now and we could not see what passed along the road. A short bridge over a canal was blown up but we climbed across on what was left of the span. We heard firing ahead of us.

We came up on the railway beyond the canal. It went on straight toward the town across the low fields. We could see the line of the other railway ahead of us. To the north was the main road where we had seen the cyclists; to the south there

was a small branch-road across the fields with thick trees on each side. I thought we had better cut to the south and work around the town that way and across country toward Campoformio and the main road to the Tagliamento. We could avoid the main line of the retreat by keeping to the secondary roads beyond Udine. I knew there were plenty of side-roads across the plain. I started down the embankment.

"Come on," I said. We would make for the side-road and work to the south of the town. We all started down the embankment. A shot was fired at us from the side-road. The bullet went into the mud of the embankment.

"Go on back," I shouted. I started up the embankment, slipping in the mud. The drivers were ahead of me. I went up the embankment as fast as I could go. Two more shots came from the thick brush and Aymo, as he was crossing the tracks, lurched, tripped and fell face down. We pulled him down on the other side and turned him over. "His head ought to be uphill," I said. Piani moved him around. He lay in the mud on the side of the embankment, his feet pointing down-hill, breathing blood irregularly. The three of us squatted over him in the rain. He was hit low in the back of the neck and the bullet had ranged upward and come out under the right eye. He died while I was stopping up the two holes. Piani laid his head down, wiped at his face, with a piece of the emergency dressing, then let it alone.

"The ——," he said.

"They weren't Germans," I said. "There can't be any Germans over there."

"Italians," Piani said, using the word as an epithet, "Italiani!" Bonello said nothing. He was sitting beside Aymo, not looking at him. Piani picked up Aymo's cap where it had rolled down the embankment and put it over his face. He took out his canteen.

"Do you want a drink?" Piani handed Bonello the canteen.

"No," Bonello said. He turned to me. "That might have happened to us any time on the railway tracks."

"No," I said. "It was because we started across the field."

Bonello shook his head. "Aymo's dead," he said. "Who's dead next, Tenente? Where do we go now?"

"Those were Italians that shot," I said. "They weren't Germans."

"I suppose if they were Germans they'd have killed all of us," Bonello said.

"We are in more danger from Italians than Germans," I said. "The rear guard are afraid of everything. The Germans know what they're after."

"You reason it out, Tenente," Bonello said.

"Where do we go now?" Piani asked.

"We better lie up some place till it's dark. If we could get south we'd be all right."

"They'd have to shoot us all to prove they were right the first time," Bonello said. "I'm not going to try them."

"We'll find a place to lie up as near to Udine as we can get and then go through when it's dark."

"Let's go then," Bonello said. We went down the north side of the embankment. I looked back. Aymo lay in the mud with the angle of the embankment. He was quite small and his arms were by his side, his puttee-wrapped legs and muddy boots together, his cap over his face. He looked very dead. It was raining. I had liked him as well as any one I ever knew. I had his papers in my pocket and would write to his family. Ahead across the fields was a farmhouse. There were trees around it and the farm buildings were built against the house. There was a balcony along the second floor held up by columns.

"We better keep a little way apart," I said. "I'll go ahead." I started toward the farmhouse. There was a path across the field.

Crossing the field, I did not know but that some one would fire on us from the trees near the farmhouse or from the farmhouse itself. I walked toward it, seeing it very clearly. The balcony of the second floor merged into the barn and there was hay coming out between the columns. The courtyard was of

stone blocks and all the trees were dripping with the rain. There was a big empty two-wheeled cart, the shafts tipped high up in the rain. I came to the courtyard, crossed it, and stood under the shelter of the balcony. The door of the house was open and I went in. Bonello and Piani came in after me. It was dark inside. I went back to the kitchen. There were ashes of a fire on the big open hearth. The pots hung over the ashes, but they were empty. I looked around but I could not find anything to eat.

"We ought to lie up in the barn," I said. "Do you think you could find anything to eat, Piani, and bring it up there?"

"I'll look," Piani said.

"I'll look too," Bonello said.

"All right," I said. "I'll go up and look at the barn." I found a stone stairway that went up from the stable underneath. The stable smelt dry and pleasant in the rain. The cattle were all gone, probably driven off when they left. The barn was half full of hay. There were two windows in the roof, one was blocked with boards, the other was a narrow dormer window on the north side. There was a chute so that hay might be pitched down to the cattle. Beams crossed the opening down into the main floor where the hay-carts drove in when the hay was hauled in to be pitched up. I heard the rain on the roof and smelled the hay and, when I went down, the clean smell of dried dung in the stable. We could pry a board loose and see out of the south window down into the courtyard. The other window looked out on the field toward the north. We could get out of either window onto the roof and down, or go down the hay chute if the stairs were impractical. It was a big barn and we could hide in the hay if we heard any one. It seemed like a good place. I was sure we could have gotten through to the south if they had not fired on us. It was impossible that there were Germans there. They were coming from the north and down the road from Cividale. They could not have come through from the south. The Italians were even more dangerous. They were frightened and firing on anything

they saw. Last night on the retreat we had heard that there had been many Germans in Italian uniforms mixing with the retreat in the north. I did not believe it. That was one of those things you always heard in the war. It was one of the things the enemy always did to you. You did not know any one who went over in German uniform to confuse them. Maybe they did but it sounded difficult. I did not believe the Germans did it. I did not believe they had to. There was no need to confuse our retreat. The size of the army and the fewness of the roads did that. Nobody gave any orders, let alone Germans. Still, they would shoot us for Germans. They shot Aymo. The hay smelled good and lying in a barn in the hay took away all the years in between. We had lain in hay and talked and shot sparrows with an air-rifle when they perched in the triangle cut high up in the wall of the barn. The barn was gone now and one year they had cut the hemlock woods and there were only stumps, dried tree-tops, branches and fireweed where the woods had been. You could not go back. If you did not go forward what happened? You never got back to Milan. And if you got back to Milan what happened? I listened to the firing to the north toward Udine. I could hear machine-gun firing. There was no shelling. That was something. They must have gotten some troops along the road. I looked down in the half-light of the hay-barn and saw Piani standing on the hauling floor. He had a long sausage, a jar of something and two bottles of wine under his arm.

"Come up," I said. "There is the ladder." Then I realized that I should help him with the things and went down. I was vague in the head from lying in the hay. I had been nearly asleep.

"Where's Bonello?" I asked.

"I'll tell you," Piani said. We went up the ladder. Up on the hay we set the things down. Piani took out his knife with the corkscrew and drew the cork on a wine bottle.

"They have sealing-wax on it," he said. "It must be good." He smiled.

"Where's Bonello?" I asked.

Piani looked at me.

"He went away, Tenente," he said. "He wanted to be a prisoner."

I did not say anything.

"He was afraid we would get killed."

I held the bottle of wine and did not say anything.

"You see we don't believe in the war anyway, Tenente."

"Why didn't you go?" I asked.

"I did not want to leave you."

"Where did he go?"

"I don't know, Tenente. He went away."

"All right," I said. "Will you cut the sausage?"

Piani looked at me in the half-light.

"I cut it while we were talking," he said. We sat in the hay and ate the sausage and drank the wine. It must have been wine they had saved for a wedding. It was so old that it was losing its color.

"You look out of this window, Luigi," I said. "I'll go look out the other window."

We had each been drinking out of one of the bottles and I took my bottle with me and went over and lay flat on the hay and looked out the narrow window at the wet country. I do not know what I expected to see but I did not see anything except the fields and the bare mulberry trees and the rain falling. I drank the wine and it did not make me feel good. They had kept it too long and it had gone to pieces and lost its quality and color. I watched it get dark outside; the darkness came very quickly. It would be a black night with the rain. When it was dark there was no use watching any more, so I went over to Piani. He was lying asleep and I did not wake him but sat down beside him for a while. He was a big man and he slept heavily. After a while I woke him and we started.

That was a very strange night. I do not know what I had expected, death perhaps and shooting in the dark and running, but nothing happened. We waited, lying flat beyond the ditch

along the main road while a German battalion passed, then when they were gone we crossed the road and went on to the north. We were very close to Germans twice in the rain but they did not see us. We got past the town to the north without seeing any Italians, then after a while came on the main channels of the retreat and walked all night toward the Tagliamento. I had not realized how gigantic the retreat was. The whole country was moving, as well as the army. We walked all night, making better time than the vehicles. My leg ached and I was tired but we made good time. It seemed so silly for Bonello to have decided to be taken prisoner. There was no danger. We had walked through two armies without incident. If Aymo had not been killed there would never have seemed to be any danger. No one had bothered us when we were in plain sight along the railway. The killing came suddenly and unreasonably. I wondered where Bonello was.

"How do you feel, Tenente?" Piani asked. We were going along the side of a road crowded with vehicles and troops.

"Fine."

"I'm tired of this walking."

"Well, all we have to do is walk now. We don't have to worry."

"Bonello was a fool."

"He was a fool all right."

"What will you do about him, Tenente?"

"I don't know."

"Can't you just put him down as taken prisoner?"

"I don't know."

"You see if the war went on they would make bad trouble for his family."

"The war won't go on," a soldier said. "We're going home. The war is over."

"Everybody's going home."

"We're all going home."

"Come on, Tenente," Piani said. He wanted to get past them.

"Tenente? Who's a Tenente? *A basso gli ufficiali!* Down with the officers!"

Piani took me by the arm. "I better call you by your name," he said. "They might try and make trouble. They've shot some officers." We worked up past them.

"I won't make a report that will make trouble for his family." I went on with our conversation.

"If the war is over it makes no difference." Piani said. "But I don't believe it's over. It's too good that it should be over."

"We'll know pretty soon," I said.

"I don't believe it's over. They all think it's over but I don't believe it."

"*Viva la Pace!*" a soldier shouted out. "We're going home!"

"It would be fine if we all went home," Piani said. "Wouldn't you like to go home?"

"Yes."

"We'll never go. I don't think it's over."

"*Andiamo a casa!*" a soldier shouted.

"They throw away their rifles," Piani said. "They take them off and drop them down while they're marching. Then they shout."

"They ought to keep their rifles."

"They think if they throw away their rifles they can't make them fight."

In the dark and the rain, making our way along the side of the road I could see that many of the troops still had their rifles. They stuck up above the capes.

"What brigade are you?" an officer called out.

"*Brigata di Pace,*" some one shouted. "Peace Brigade!" The officer said nothing.

"What does he say. What does the officer say?"

"Down with the officer. *Viva la Pace!*"

"Come on," Piani said. We passed two British ambulances, abandoned in the block of vehicles.

"They're from Gorizia," Piani said. "I know the cars."

"They got further than we did."

"They started earlier."

"I wonder where the drivers are?"

"Up ahead probably."

"The Germans have stopped outside Udine," I said. "These people will all get across the river."

"Yes," Piani said. "That's why I think the war will go on."

"The Germans could come on," I said. "I wonder why they don't come on."

"I don't know. I don't know anything about this kind of war."

"They have to wait for their transport I suppose."

"I don't know," Piani said. Alone he was much gentler. When he was with the others he was a very rough talker.

"Are you married, Luigi?"

"You know I am married."

"Is that why you did not want to be a prisoner?"

"That is one reason. Are you married, Tenente?"

"No."

"Neither is Bonello."

"You can't tell anything by a man's being married. But I should think a married man would want to get back to his wife," I said. I would be glad to talk about wives.

"Yes."

"How are your feet?"

"They're sore enough."

Before daylight we reached the bank of the Tagliamento and followed down along the flooded river to the bridge where all the traffic was crossing.

"They ought to be able to hold at this river," Piani said. In the dark the flood looked high. The water swirled and it was wide. The wooden bridge was nearly three-quarters of a mile across, and the river, that usually ran in narrow channels in the wide stony bed far below the bridge, was close under the wooden planking. We went along the bank and then worked our way into the crowd that were crossing the bridge. Crossing slowly in the rain a few feet above the flood, pressed tight in

the crowd, the box of an artillery caisson just ahead, I looked over the side and watched the river. Now that we could not go our own pace I felt very tired. There was no exhilaration in crossing the bridge. I wondered what it would be like if a plane bombed it in the daytime.

"Piani," I said.

"Here I am, Tenente." He was a little ahead in the jam. No one was talking. They were all trying to get across as soon as they could: thinking only of that. We were almost across. At the far end of the bridge there were officers and carabinieri standing on both sides flashing lights. I saw them silhouetted against the sky-line. As we came close to them I saw one of the officers point to a man in the column. A carabinieri went in after him and came out holding the man by the arm. He took him away from the road. We came almost opposite them. The officers were scrutinizing every one in the column, sometimes speaking to each other, going forward to flash a light in some one's face. They took some one else out just before we came opposite. I saw the man. He was a lieutenant-colonel. I saw the stars in the box on his sleeve as they flashed a light on him. His hair was gray and he was short and fat. The carabinieri pulled him in behind the line of officers. As we came opposite I saw one or two of them look at me. Then one pointed at me and spoke to a carabinieri. I saw the carabinieri start for me, come through the edge of the column toward me, then felt him take me by the collar.

"What's the matter with you?" I said and hit him in the face. I saw his face under the hat, upturned moustaches and blood coming down his cheek. Another one dove in toward us.

"What's the matter with you?" I said. He did not answer. He was watching a chance to grab me. I put my arm behind me to loosen my pistol.

"Don't you know you can't touch an officer?"

The other one grabbed me from behind and pulled my arm up so that it twisted in the socket. I turned with him and the

other one grabbed me around the neck. I kicked his shins and got my left knee into his groin.

"Shoot him if he resists," I heard some one say.

"What's the meaning of this?" I tried to shout but my voice was not very loud. They had me at the side of the road now.

"Shoot him if he resists," an officer said. "Take him over back."

"Who are you?"

"You'll find out."

"Who are you?"

"Battle police," another officer said.

"Why don't you ask me to step over instead of having one of these airplanes grab me?"

They did not answer. They did not have to answer. They were battle police.

"Take him back there with the others," the first officer said. "You see. He speaks Italian with an accent."

"So do you, you ——," I said.

"Take him back with the others," the first officer said. They took me down behind the line of officers below the road toward a group of people in a field by the river bank. As we walked toward them shots were fired. I saw flashes of the rifles and heard the reports. We came up to the group. There were four officers standing together, with a man in front of them with a carabinieri on each side of him. A group of men were standing guarded by carabinieri. Four other carabinieri stood near the questioning officers, leaning on their carbines. They were wide-hatted carabinieri. The two who had me shoved me in with the group waiting to be questioned. I looked at the man the officers were questioning. He was the fat gray-haired little lieutenant-colonel they had taken out of the column. The questioners had all the efficiency, coldness and command of themselves of Italians who are firing and are not being fired on.

"Your brigade?"

He told them.

"Regiment?"

He told them.

"Why are you not with your regiment?"

He told them.

"Do you not know that an officer should be with his troops?"

He did.

That was all. Another officer spoke.

"It is you and such as you that have let the barbarians onto the sacred soil of the fatherland."

"I beg your pardon," said the lieutenant-colonel.

"It is because of treachery such as yours that we have lost the fruits of victory."

"Have you ever been in a retreat?" the lieutenant-colonel asked.

"Italy should never retreat."

We stood there in the rain and listened to this. We were facing the officers and the prisoner stood in front and a little to one side of us.

"If you are going to shoot me," the lieutenant-colonel said, "please shoot me at once without further questioning. The questioning is stupid." He made the sign of the cross. The officers spoke together. One wrote something on a pad of paper.

"Abandoned his troops, ordered to be shot," he said.

Two carabinieri took the lieutenant-colonel to the river bank. He walked in the rain, an old man with his hat off, a carabinieri on either side. I did not watch them shoot him but I heard the shots. They were questioning some one else. This officer too was separated from his troops. He was not allowed to make an explanation. He cried when they read the sentence from the pad of paper, and they were questioning another when they shot him. They made a point of being intent on questioning the next man while the man who had been questioned before was being shot. In this way there was obviously nothing they could do about it. I did not know whether I should wait to be questioned or make a break now. I was obviously a German in Italian uniform. I saw how their minds

worked; if they had minds and if they worked. They were all young men and they were saving their country. The second army was being re-formed beyond the Tagliamento. They were executing officers of the rank of major and above who were separated from their troops. They were also dealing summarily with German agitators in Italian uniform. They wore steel helmets. Only two of us had steel helmets. Some of the carabinieri had them. The other carabinieri wore the wide hat. Airplanes we called them. We stood in the rain and were taken out one at a time to be questioned and shot. So far they had shot every one they had questioned. The questioners had that beautiful detachment and devotion to stern justice of men dealing in death without being in any danger of it. They were questioning a full colonel of a line regiment. Three more officers had just been put in with us.

"Where was his regiment?"

I looked at the carabinieri. They were looking at the newcomers. The others were looking at the colonel. I ducked down, pushed between two men, and ran for the river, my head down. I tripped at the edge and went in with a splash. The water was very cold and I stayed under as long as I could. I could feel the current swirl me and I stayed under until I thought I could never come up. The minute I came up I took a breath and went down again. It was easy to stay under with so much clothing and my boots. When I came up the second time I saw a piece of timber ahead of me and reached it and held on with one hand. I kept my head behind it and did not even look over it. I did not want to see the bank. There were shots when I ran and shots when I came up the first time. I heard them when I was almost above water. There were no shots now. The piece of timber swung in the current and I held it with one hand. I looked at the bank. It seemed to be going by very fast. There was much wood in the stream. The water was very cold. We passed the brush of an island above the water. I held onto the timber with both hands and let it take me along. The shore was out of sight now.

REVOLT IN THE DESERT

FROM

"REVOLT IN THE DESERT" BY T. E. LAWRENCE

At dawn on the sixteenth of September 1917 we rode out from Rumm. Aid, the blind Sherif, insisted on coming, despite his lost sight; saying he could ride, if he could not shoot, and that if God prospered us he would take leave from Feisal in the flush of the success, and go home, not too sorry, to the blank life which would be left. Zaal led his twenty-five Nowasera, a clan of Auda's Arabs who called themselves my men, and were famous the desert over for their saddle-camels. My hard riding tempted them to my company.

Old Motlog el Awar, owner of el Jedha, the finest she-camel in North Arabia, rode her in our van. We looked at her with proud or greedy eyes, according to our relationship with him. My Ghazala was taller and more grand, with a faster trot, but too old to be galloped. However she was the only other animal in the party, or, indeed, in this desert, to be matched with the Jedha, and my honour was increased by her dignity.

The rest of our party strayed like a broken necklace. No one group would ride or speak with another, and I passed back and forth all day like a shuttle, talking first to one lowering sheikh, and then to another, striving to draw them together, so that before a cry to action came there might be solidarity. As yet they agreed only in not hearing any word from Zaal as to the order of our march; though he was admitted the most intelligent warrior, and the most experienced. For my private part he was the only one to be trusted farther than eyesight. Of the others, it seemed to me that neither their words nor their counsels, perhaps not their rifles, were sure.

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We put our mid-day halt in a fertile place, where the late spring rain, falling on a sandy talus, had brought up a thick tufting of silvery grass which our camels loved. The weather was mild, perfect as an August in England, and we lingered in great content, recovered at last from the bickering appetites of the days before the start, and from that slight rending of nerve inevitable when leaving even a temporary settlement. Man, in our circumstances, took root so soon.

Late in the day we rode again, winding downhill in a narrow valley between moderate sandstone walls: till before sunset we were out on another flat of laid yellow mud, like that which had been so wonderful a prelude to Rumm's glory. By its edge we camped. My care had borne fruit, for we settled in only three parties, by bright fires of crackling, flaring tamarisk. At one supped my men; at the second Zaal; at the third the other Howeitat; and late at night, when all the chiefs had been well adjusted with gazelle meat and hot bread, it became possible to bring them to my neutral fire, and discuss sensibly our course for the morrow.

It seemed that about sunset we should water at Mudowwara well, two or three miles this side of the station, in a covered valley. Then, in the early night, we might go forward to examine the station and see if, in our weakness, we might yet attempt some stroke against it. I held strongly to this (against the common taste) for it was by so much the most critical point of the line. The Arabs could not see it, since their minds did not hold a picture of the long, linked Turkish front with its necessitous demands. However, we had reached internal harmony, and scattered confidently to sleep.

In the morning we delayed to eat again, having only six hours of march before us; and then pushed across the mud-flat to a plain of firm limestone rag, carpeted with brown, weather-blunted flint. This was succeeded by low hills, with occasional soft beds of sand, under the steeper slopes where eddying winds had dropped their dust. Through these we rode up the shallow valleys to a crest; and then by like valleys down the

far side, whence we issued abruptly, from dark, tossed stone-heaps into the sun-steeped wideness of a plain. Across it an occasional low dune stretched a drifting line.

We had made our noon halt at the first entering of the broken country; and, rightly, in the late afternoon came to the well. It was an open pool, a few yards square, in a hollow valley of large stone-slabs and flint and sand. The stagnant water looked uninviting. Over its face lay a thick mantle of green slime, from which swelled curious bladder-islands of floating fatty pink. The Arabs explained that the Turks had thrown dead camels into the pool to make the water foul; but that time had passed and the effect was grown faint. It would have been fainter had the criterion of their effort been my taste.

Yet it was all the drink we should get up here unless we took Mudowwara, so we set to and filled our waterskins. One of the Howeitat, while helping in this, slipped off the wet edge into the water. Its green carpet closed oilily over his head and hid him for an instant: then he came up, gasping vigorously, and scrambled out amid our laughter, leaving behind him a black hole in the scum from which a stench of old meat rose like a visible pillar, and hung about us and him and the valley, disconcertingly.

At dusk, Zaal and I, with the sergeants and others, crept forward quietly. In half an hour we were at the last crest, in a place where the Turks had dug trenches, and stoned up an elaborate outpost of engrailed sangars, which on this black new-moon night of our raid were empty. In front and below lay the station, its doors, and windows sharply marked by the yellow cooking fires and lights of the garrison. It seemed close under our observation; but the Stokes gun would carry only three hundred yards. Accordingly we went nearer, hearing the enemy noises, and attentively afraid lest their barking dogs uncover us. Sergeant Stokes made casts out to left and right, in search of gun-positions, but found nothing that was satisfactory.

Meanwhile, Zaal and I crawled across the last flat, till we could count the unlighted tents and hear the men talking. One came out a few steps in our direction, then hesitated. He struck a match to light a cigarette, and the bold light flooded his face, so that we saw him plainly, a young, hollow-faced sickly officer. He squatted, busy for a moment, and returned to his men, who hushed as he passed.

We moved back to our hill and consulted in whispers. The station was very long, of stone buildings, so solid that they might be proof against our time-fused shell. The garrison seemed about two hundred. We were one hundred and sixteen rifles and not a happy family. Surprise was the only benefit we could be sure of.

So, in the end, I voted that we leave it, unalarmed, for a future occasion, which might be soon. But, actually, one accident after another saved Mudowwara; and it was not until August, 1918, that Buxton's Camel Corps at last measured to it the fate so long overdue.

Quietly we regained our camels and slept. Next morning we returned on our tracks to let a fold of the plain hide us from the railway, and then marched south across the sandy flat; seeing tracks of gazelle, oryx and ostrich; with, in one spot, stale pad-marks of leopard. We were making for the low hills bounding the far side, intending to blow up a train; for Zaal said that where these touched the railway was such a curve as we needed for minelaying, and that the spurs commanding it would give us ambush and a field of fire for our machine-guns.

So we turned east in the southern ridges till within half a mile of the line. There the party halted in a thirty-foot valley, while a few of us walked down the line, which bent a little eastward to avoid the point of higher ground under our feet. The point ended in a flat table fifty feet above the track, facing north across the valley.

The metals crossed the hollow on a high bank, pierced by a two-arched bridge for the passage of rain-water. This seemed an ideal spot to lay the charge. It was our first try at electric

mining and we had no idea what would happen; but it stood to our reason that the job would be more sure with an arch under the explosive because, whatever the effect on the locomotive, the bridge would go, and the succeeding coaches be inevitably derailed.

Back with our camels, we dumped the loads, and sent the animals to safe pasture near some undercut rocks from which the Arabs scraped salt. The freedmen carried down the Stokes gun with its shells; the Lewis guns; and the gelatine with its insulated wire, magneto and tools to the chosen place. The sergeants set up their toys on a terrace, while we went down to the bridge to dig a bed between the ends of two steel sleepers, wherein to hide my fifty pounds of gelatine. We had stripped off the paper wrapping of the individual explosive plugs and kneaded them together by help of the sun heat into a shaking jelly in a sandbag.

The burying of it was not easy. The embankment was steep, and in the sheltered pocket between it and hill-side was a wind-laid bank of sand. No one crossed this but myself, stepping carefully; yet I left unavoidable great prints over its smoothness. The ballast dug out from the track I had to gather in my cloak for carriage in repeated journeys to the culvert, whence it could be tipped naturally over the shingle bed of the water-course.

It took me nearly two hours to dig in and cover the charge: then came the difficult job of unrolling the heavy wires from the detonator to the hills whence we would fire the mine. The top sand was crusted and had to be broken through in burying the wires. They were stiff wires, which scarred the wind-rippled surface with long lines like the belly marks of preposterously narrow and heavy snakes. When pressed down in one place they rose into the air in another. At last they had to be weighted down with rocks which, in turn, had to be buried at the cost of great disturbance of the ground.

Afterwards it was necessary, with a sandbag, to stipple the marks into a wavy surface; and, finally, with a bellows and long

fanning sweeps of my cloak, to simulate the smooth laying of the wind. The whole job took five hours to finish; but then it was well finished; neither myself nor any of us could see where the charge lay, or that double wires led out underground from it to the firing-point two hundred yards off, behind the ridge marked for our rifle-men.

The wires were just long enough to cross from this ridge into a depression. There we brought up the two ends and connected them with the electric exploder. It was an ideal place both for it and for the men who fired it, except that the bridge was not visible thence.

However, this only meant that some one would have to press the handle at a signal from a point fifty yards ahead, commanding the bridge and the ends of the wires alike. Salem, Feisal's best slave, asked for this task of honour, and was yielded it by acclamation. The end of the afternoon was spent in showing him (on the disconnected exploder) what to do, till he was act-perfect and banged down the ratchet precisely as I raised my hand with an imaginary engine on the bridge.

We walked back to camp, leaving one man on watch by the line. Our baggage was deserted, and we stared about in a puzzle for the rest, till we saw them suddenly sitting against the golden light of sunset along a high ridge. We yelled to them to lie down or come down, but they persisted up there on their perch like a school of hooded crows, in full view of north and south.

At last we ran up and threw them off the skyline, too late. The Turks in a little hillpost by Hallat Ammar, four miles south of us, had seen them, and opened fire in their alarm upon the long shadows which the declining sun was pushing gradually up the slopes towards the post. Beduin were past-masters in the art of using country, but in their abiding contempt for the stupidity of the Turks they would take no care to fight them. This ridge was visible at once from Mudowwara and Hallat Ammar, and they had frightened both places by their sudden ominous expectant watch.

However, the dark closed on us, and we knew we must sleep away the night patiently in hope of the morrow. Perhaps the Turks would reckon us gone if our place looked deserted in the morning. So we lit fires in a deep hollow, baked bread and were comfortable. The common tasks had made us one party, and the hill-top folly shamed every one into agreement that Zaal should be our leader.

* * * * *

Day broke quietly, and for hours we watched the empty railway with its peaceful camps. The constant care of Zaal and of his lame cousin, Howeimil, kept us hidden, though with difficulty, because of the insatiate restlessness of the Beduin, who would never sit down for ten minutes, but must fidget and do or say something. This defect made them very inferior to the stolid English for the long, tedious strain of a waiting war. Also it partly accounted for their uncertain stomachs in defence. Today they made us very angry.

Perhaps, after all, the Turks saw us, for at nine o'clock some forty men came out of the tents on the hill-top by Hallat Ammar to the south and advanced in open order. If we left them alone, they would turn us off our mine in an hour; if we opposed them with our superior strength and drove them back, the railway would take notice, and traffic be held up. It was a quandary, which eventually we tried to solve by sending thirty men to check the enemy patrol gradually; and, if possible, to draw them lightly aside into the broken hills. This might hide our main position and reassure them as to our insignificant strength and purpose.

For some hours it worked as we had hoped; the firing grew desultory and distant. A permanent patrol came confidently up from the south and walked past our hill, over our mine and on towards Mudowwara without noticing us. There were eight soldiers and a stout corporal, who mopped his brow against the heat, for it was now after eleven o'clock and really warm. When he had passed us by a mile or two the fatigue of the tramp

became too much for him. He marched his party into the shade of a long culvert, under whose arches a cool draught from the east was gently flowing, and there in comfort they lay on the soft sand, drank water from their bottles, smoked, and at last slept. We presumed that this was the noon-day rest which every solid Turk in the hot summer of Arabia took as a matter of principle, and that their allowing themselves the pause showed that we were disproved or ignored. However, we were in error.

Noon brought a fresh care. Through my powerful glasses we saw a hundred Turkish soldiers issue from Mudowwara Station and make straight across the sandy plain towards our place. They were coming very slowly, and no doubt unwillingly, for sorrow at losing their beloved midday sleep: but at their very worst marching and temper they could hardly take more than two hours before they reached us.

We began to pack up, preparatory to moving off, having decided to leave the mine and its leads in place on chance that the Turks might not find them, and we be able to return and take advantage of all the careful work. We sent a messenger to our covering party on the south, that they should meet us farther up near those scarred rocks which served as screen for our pasturing camels.

Just as he had gone, the watchman cried out that smoke in clouds was rising from Hallat Ammar. Zaal and I rushed uphill and saw by its shape and volume that indeed there must be a train waiting in that station. As we were trying to see it over the hill, suddenly it moved out in our direction. We yelled to the Arabs to get into position as quick as possible, and there came a wild scramble over sand and rock. Stokes and Lewis, being booted, could not win the race; but they came well up, their pains and dysentery forgotten.

The men with rifles posted themselves in a long line behind the spur running from the guns past the exploder to the mouth of the valley. From it they would fire directly into the derailed carriages at less than one hundred and fifty yards, whereas the ranges for the Stokes and Lewis guns were about three hundred

yards. An Arab stood up on high behind the guns and shouted to us what the train was doing—a necessary precaution, for if it carried troops and detrained them behind our ridge we should have to face about like a flash and retire fighting up the valley for our lives. Fortunately it held on at all the speed the two locomotives could make on wood fuel.

It drew near where we had been reported, and opened random fire into the desert. I could hear the racket coming, as I sat on my hillock by the bridge to give the signal to Salem, who danced round the exploder on his knees, crying with excitement, and calling urgently on God to make him fruitful. The Turkish fire sounded heavy, and I wondered with how many men we were going to have affair, and if the mine would be advantage enough for our eighty fellows to equal them. It would have been better if the first electrical experiment had been simpler.

However, at that moment the engines, looking very big, rocked with screaming whistles into view around the bend. Behind them followed ten box-wagons, crowded with rifle-muzzles at the windows and doors; and in little sandbag nests on the roofs Turks precariously held on, to shoot at us. I had not thought of two engines, and on the moment decided to fire the charge under the second, so that however little the mine's effect, the uninjured engine should not be able to uncouple and drag the carriages away.

Accordingly, when the front "driver" of the second engine was on the bridge, I raised my hand to Salem. There followed a terrific roar, and the line vanished from sight behind a spouting column of black dust and smoke a hundred feet high and wide. Out of the darkness came shattering crashes and long, loud metallic clangings of ripped steel, with many lumps of iron and plate; while one entire wheel of a locomotive whirled up suddenly black out of the cloud against the sky, and sailed musically over our heads to fall slowly and heavily into the desert behind. Except for the flight of these, there succeeded a deathly silence, with no cry of men or rifle-shot, as the now-

gray mist of the explosion drifted from the line towards us, and over our ridge until it was lost in the hills.

In the lull, I ran southward to join the sergeants. Salem picked up his rifle and charged out into the murk. Before I had climbed to the guns the hollow was alive with shots, and with the brown figures of the Beduin leaping forward to grips with the enemy. I looked round to see what was happening so quickly, and saw the train stationary and dismembered along the track, with its wagon sides jumping under the bullets which riddled them, while Turks were falling out from the far doors to gain the shelter of the railway embankment.

As I watched, our machine-guns chattered out over my head, and the long rows of Turks on the carriage roofs rolled over, and were swept off the top like bales of cotton before the furious shower of bullets which stormed along the roofs and splashed clouds of yellow chips from the planking. The dominant position of the guns had been an advantage to us so far.

When I reached Stokes and Lewis the engagement had taken another turn. The remaining Turks had got behind the bank, here about eleven feet high, and from cover of the wheels were firing point-blank at the Beduin twenty yards away across the sand-filled dip. The enemy in the crescent of the curving line were secure from the machine-guns; but Stokes slipped in his first shell, and after a few seconds there came a crash as it burst beyond the train in the desert.

He touched the elevating screw, and his second shot fell just by the trucks in the deep hollow below the bridge where the Turks were taking refuge. It made a shambles of the place. The survivors of the group broke out in a panic across the desert, throwing away their rifles and equipment as they ran. This was the opportunity of the Lewis gunners. The sergeant grimly traversed with drum after drum, till the open sand was littered with bodies. Mushagraf, the Sherari boy behind the second gun, saw the battle over, threw aside his weapon with a yell, and dashed down at speed with his rifle to join the others

who were beginning, like wild beasts, to tear open the carriages and fall to plunder. It had taken nearly ten minutes.

I ran down to the ruins to see what the mine had done. The bridge was gone; and into its gap was fallen the front wagon, which had been filled with sick. The smash had killed all but three or four and had rolled dead and dying into a bleeding heap against the splintered end. One of those yet alive deliriously cried the word typhus. So I wedged shut the door, and left them there, alone.

Succeeding wagons were derailed and smashed: some had frames irreparably buckled. The second engine was a blanched pile of smoking iron. Its driving wheels had been blown upward, taking away the side of the fire-box. Cab and tender were twisted into strips, among the piled stones of the bridge abutment. It would never run again. The front engine had got off better: though heavily derailed and lying half-over, with the cab burst, yet its steam was at pressure, and driving-gear intact.

The valley was a weird sight. The Arabs, gone raving mad, were rushing about at top speed bareheaded and half-naked, screaming, shooting into the air, clawing one another nail and fist, while they burst open trucks and staggered back and forward with immense bales, which they ripped by the rail-side, and tossed through, smashing what they did not want.

There were scores of carpets spread about; dozens of mattresses and flowered quilts; blankets in heaps; clothes for men and women in full variety; clocks, cooking-pots, food, ornaments and weapons. To one side stood thirty or forty hysterical women, unveiled, tearing their clothes and hair; shrieking themselves distracted. The Arabs without regard to them went on wrecking the household goods; looting their absolute fill. Camels had become common property. Each man frantically loaded the nearest with what it could carry and shooed it westward into the void, while he turned to his next fancy.

Seeing me tolerably unemployed, the women rushed, and caught at me with howls for mercy. I assured them that all

was going well: but they would not get away till some husbands delivered me. These knocked their wives off and seized my feet in a very agony of terror of instant death. A Turk so broken down was a nasty spectacle: I kicked them off as well as I could with bare feet, and finally broke free.

Lewis and Stokes had come down to help me. I was a little anxious about them; for the Arabs, having lost their wits, were as ready to assault friend as foe. Three times I had had to defend myself when they pretended not to know me and snatched at my things. However, the sergeant's war-stained khaki presented few attractions. Lewis went out east of the railway to count the thirty men he had slain; and, incidentally, to find Turkish gold and trophies in their haversacks. Stokes strolled through the wrecked bridge, saw there the bodies of twenty Turks torn to pieces by his second shell, and retired hurriedly.

Ahmed came up to me with his arms full of booty and shouted (no Arab could speak normally in the thrill of victory) that an old woman in the last wagon but one wished to see me. I sent him at once, empty handed, for my camel and some baggage camels to remove the guns; for the enemy's fire was now plainly audible, and the Arabs, sated with spoils, were escaping one by one towards the hills, driving tottering camels before them into safety. It was bad tactics to leave the guns until the end; but the confusion of a first, overwhelmingly successful, experiment had dulled our judgment.

Ahmed never brought the camels. My men, possessed by greed, had dispersed over the land with the Beduins. The sergeants and I were alone by the wreck, which had a strange silence now. We began to fear that we must abandon the guns and run for it, but just then saw two camels dashing back. Zaal and Howeimil had missed me and had returned in search.

We were rolling up the insulated cable, our only piece. Zaal dropped from his camel and would have me mount and ride; but, instead, we loaded it with the wire and the exploder. Zaal found time to laugh at our quaint booty, after all the gold and silver in the train. Howeimil was dead lame from an old wound

in the knee and could not walk, but we made him couch his camel, and hoisted the Lewis guns, tied butt to butt like scissors, behind his saddle. There remained the trench mortars; but Stokes reappeared, unskilfully leading by the nose a baggage camel he had found straying. We packed the mortars in haste; put Stokes (who was still weak with his dysentery) on Zaal's saddle, with the Lewis guns, and sent off the three camels in charge of Howeimil, at their best pace.

Meanwhile, Lewis and Zaal, in a sheltered and invisible hollow behind the old gun-position, made a fire of cartridge boxes, petrol and waste, banked round it the Lewis drums and spare small-arms ammunition; and, gingerly, on the top, laid some loose Stokes' shells. Then we ran. As the flames reached the cordite and ammonal there was a colossal and continuing noise. The thousands of cartridges exploded in series like massed machine-guns, and the shells roared off in thick columns of dust and smoke. The outflanking Turks, impressed by the tremendous defence, felt that we were in strength and strongly posted. They halted their rush, took cover, and began carefully to surround our position and reconnoitre it according to rule, while we sped panting into concealment among the ridges.

It seemed a happy ending to the affair, and we were glad to get off with no more loss than my camels and baggage; though this included the sergeants' cherished kits. However, there was food at Rumm, and Zaal thought perhaps we should find our property with the others, who were waiting ahead. We did. My men were loaded with booty, and had with them all our camels, whose saddles were being suddenly delivered of spoils to look ready for our mounting.

We asked if any one were hurt, and a voice said that the Shimt's boy—a very dashing fellow—had been killed in the first rush forward at the train. This rush was a mistake, made without instructions, as the Lewis and Stokes guns were sure to end the business if the mine worked properly. So I felt that his loss was not directly my reproach.

Three men had been slightly wounded. Then one of Feisal's

slaves vouchsafed that Salem was missing. We called every one together and questioned them. At last an Arab said that he had seen him lying hit, just beyond the engine. This reminded Lewis, who, ignorant that he was one of us, had seen a negro on the ground there, badly hurt. I had not been told and was angry, for half the Howeitat must have known of it, and that Salem was in my charge. By their default now, for the second time, I had left a friend behind.

I asked for volunteers to come back and find him. After a little Zaal agreed, and then twelve of the Nowasera. We trotted fast across the plain towards the line. As we topped the last ridge but one we saw the train-wreck with Turks swarming over it. There must have been one hundred and fifty of them, and our attempt was hopeless. Salem would have been dead, for the Turks did not take Arab prisoners. Indeed, they used to kill them horribly; so, in mercy, we were finishing those of our badly wounded who would have to be left helpless on abandoned ground.

We gave up Salem: and prepared, heavily, to march away. Of our ninety prisoners, ten were friendly Medina women electing to go to Mecca by way of Feisal. There had been twenty-two riderless camels. The women had climbed on to five pack saddles, and the wounded were in pairs on the residue. It was late in the afternoon. We were exhausted, the prisoners had drunk all our water. We must refill from the old well at Mudowwara that night to sustain ourselves so far as Rumm.

As the well was close to the station, it was highly desirable that we get to it and away, lest the Turks divine our course and find us there defenceless. We broke up into little parties and struggled north. Victory always undid an Arab force, so we were no longer a raiding party, but a stumbling baggage caravan, loaded to breaking-point with enough household goods to make rich an Arab tribe for years.

My sergeants asked me for a sword each, as souvenir of their first private battle. As I went down the column to look out something, suddenly I met Feisal's freedmen; and to my aston-

ishment on the crupper behind one of them, strapped to him, soaked with blood, unconscious, was the missing Salem.

I trotted up to Ferhan and asked wherever he had found him. He told me that when the Stokes gun fired its first shell, Salem rushed past the locomotive, and one of the Turks shot him in the back. The bullet had come out near his spine, without, in their judgment, hurting him mortally. After the train was taken, the Howeitat had stripped him of cloak, dagger, rifle and headgear. Mijbil, one of the freedmen, had found him, lifted him straight to his camel, and trekked off homeward without telling us. Ferhan, overtaking him on the road, had relieved him of Salem; who, when he recovered as later he did, perfectly, bore me always a little grudge for having left him behind, when he was of my company and wounded. I had failed in staunchness. My habit of hiding behind a Sherif was to avoid measuring myself against the pitiless Arab standard, with its no-mercy for foreigners who wore its clothes, and aped its manners. Not often was I caught with so poor a shield as blind Sherif Aid.

We reached the well in three hours and watered without mishap. Afterwards we moved off another ten miles or so, beyond fear of pursuit. There we lay down and slept, and in the morning found ourselves happily tired. Stokes had had his dysentery heavy upon him the night before, but sleep and the ending of anxiety made him well. He and I and Lewis, the only unburdened ones, went on in front across one huge mud flat after another till just before sunset we were at the bottom of Wadi Rumm.

This new route was important for our armoured cars, because its twenty miles of hard mud might enable them to reach Mudowwara easily. If so, we should be able to hold up the circulation of trains when we pleased. Thinking of this, we wheeled into the avenue of Rumm, still gorgeous in sunset colour; the cliffs as red as the clouds in the west, like them in scale and in the level bar they raised against the sky. Again we felt how Rumm inhibited excitement by its serene beauty.

Such whelming greatness dwarfed us, stripped off the cloak of laughter in which we had ridden over the jocund flats.

Two days later we were at Akaba; entering in glory, laden with precious things, and boasting that the trains were at our mercy. From Akaba the two sergeants took hurried ship to Egypt. Cairo had remembered them and gone peevish because of their non-return. However, they could pay the penalty of this cheerfully. They had won a battle single handed; had had dysentery; lived on camel-milk; and learned to ride a camel fifty miles a day without pain. Also Allenby gave them a medal each.

WAR IN THE HARBOR

FROM

"A SIX-HOUR SHIFT" BY WILLIAM McFEE

The rain, in an inconclusive way, has ceased, though the scupper-pipes still gurgle and cluck with the water running from above. I walk along the after deck, climb up the heap of sandbags built round the gun-platform, and take refuge in a sort of canvas sentry-box which the gunners have improvised out of ammunition cases, a spring mattress, and some old tarpaulins. Here I am more than ever solitary at this hour. The gun, looking like a gaunt cab-horse in its gray canvas shroud, droops its muzzle slightly, as though dispirited because we go so rarely to sea. Nothing else can I see of the ship, save the flagpole, a ghostly outpost of humanity, for beyond it the world has dissolved into a sad chaos of water and sky. There is no wind. The waters of the Gulf lie placid and obscure. The sky-line has vanished, and one has the illusion of floating in infinite space, in a sort of aerial Noah's Ark without any animals. The patches of white in the cloud-canopy are reflected with eerie accuracy in the lifeless and invisible mirror below. One feels a slight vertigo, for all things seem to have been swallowed up, and even Time, that last refuge of saints and sinners, seems to have stopped.

The rain comes as a relief, as though the works of the universe were getting under way again. My knees being exposed, I decide that I have had enough of nature in solution and climb down from the gun-platform. The moon, which is shining behind the dense clouds, brightens the patches of white, and these are reflected on the wet deck. Picking my way carefully, for all scuttles are screened, I reach the machine-

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room. Nothing is changed save the hands of the clock: it is now half-past three. The faded Irishman has become a shade more brisk in his movements. From now on he will become more and more active and intelligent in carrying out his duties, until he reaches a climax of senseless energy at four by breaking into speech with a "Well, good-night, sir," and vanishing into his kennel. His place is taken by a somnolent negro.

At four the rain is pouring down with all its old violence, and I make my way along to the mess-room for more tea. I bump into a damp silent man, a Greek sailor, on night duty. He is supposed to keep a lookout at the gangway and tend the galley-fires. He does both very well. Some sailors are poor hands at stoking. The Russian, who occasionally acts as night-watchman, is no good. They say Russians understand tea. Our Russian understands nothing.

The Japanese second cook, on being called by the Greek mariner, is furious with the fire. The Greek and Arab firemen do not understand that coal-dust is unsuitable for galley fires. There are, at times, international complications.

The Fourth Engineer and I once more foregather in the mess-room. I make the tea, and I do it this way. The tea-pot, of white china, is rinsed and scalded with boiling water. I then put in the correct quantity of tea, which is an art acquired only in the school of experience. Then I pour on the correct quantity of fresh-boiling water—another art. The tea is left to steep on the hob for as long as it takes to cut, toast, and butter two slices of bread. The tea is now ready. I pour it. its colour is superb. Having done all this, I cast a look of triumph on the Fourth Engineer, who informs me that there is no milk; very much as a silly young staff officer might tell his general that the army has no ammunition. I retire to my room and return with a cream-jug full of condensed milk of an age so vague that only boiling water can reduce it to a liquid form. Thereupon we sit down, and having exhausted every conceivable subject of conversation six months ago, we drink and munch in silence.

The militarists say that war is necessary to develop the soul of a nation; without war men would sink into stupidity and sloth.

Having eaten and drunk in silence, we light cigarettes and go away, he down below to pump the boilers up, I to my machine-room to see how the somnolent negro is going on. He is going on very much as I expected. He wanders like a sleep-walker among the machinery, attending to his duties after his own fashion. I make up the log to four o'clock, examine certain things that may go wrong, but never do, and go out into the alleyway again.

The hopeless dawn is approaching. A ghastly pallor now faintly outlines a mountain which I indolently call Ben Lomond. The Gulf of Salonika is almost entirely surrounded by land, and the city is built on the slopes of a mountain. Ben Lomond is farther off to the eastward; other mountains form ramparts to the west and north, while the Vardar River delta insinuates itself among the more rugged features in a most curious way. Southward, beyond the headland that marks the entrance, the horizon is closed by the sublime peak of Olympos. The Gulf, therefore, is a kind of bowl, against the rim of which the clouds are condensed and held. Under their caps of cotton-woolly clouds the mountains are white with snow.

We have come out of the void, and dark blobs are now recognizable as ships. Lights glitter along the shore. A motor-lighter passes, her engine exhaust beating the still air like a pulse. The silence is no longer profound or tragic. The world of men, the world of living men, is coming back, and I am glad. I have a weakness for the world of living men. A steamer, weighing her anchor with much puffing of steam from her windlass-exhaust, blows her whistle. It is a trumpet-blast, completing the rout of the powers of darkness.

There is a crash from our galley. Someone, most probably the Japanese second cook, has dropped the poker. The Japanese second cook is a creature of moods, often passionate. He is, so they say, a student of philosophy at Tokyo Univer-

sity. He has come to sea to earn more money to complete his courses—of philosophy, I suppose. The chief cook, who is a Chinaman, has presumably completed his studies in philosophy, while the third cook, who is an Italian, has never studied philosophy at all. Anyhow, various noises combine to inform me that all three are now in the galley engaged in making bread and preparing breakfast for the crew in a more or less philosophical manner.

Other sounds assert themselves, too. Weird moans from below announce the Fourth Engineer's success with his boilers. A small dog in the firemen's house aft yelps tediously at an imaginary enemy. He presumes upon his rating as a mascot. A sleepy Greek boy, with weak eyes and legs, appears from the forecastle with a tin tea-pot. He is reported to be a Venizelist. Venizelists, I observe, make poor sailors. The night watchman, who answers to the name of Papa Gregovis, but whose political tendencies are obscure, fades away forward. The oiler in the main engine-room, a one-eyed mulatto, carries his tea-can along.

So an hour passes.

Once again the rain has ceased and I go out on the after deck and walk to and fro. I discover the crowded roadstead of Salonika. Black blobs have become transports, misty phantoms have changed into hospital ships, gray shadows into men-of-war. One hospital ship is preparing to move—does move, as I watch her. She is girdled with a necklace of emerald lights. On her rail is a red cross of electric lights. She is very beautiful, a jewelled wraith moving noiselessly across our bows. Several Greek schooners, with all sails set, float near us on the glassy water, waiting for a wind. Time is no object with them. One appears close to our quarter, like a ghost of some past age, a fabulous blue galleon with silver sails. She is part of the ridiculous unreality of the whole business.

THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND

FROM

"THE SEA DEVIL'S FO'C'SLE" BY LOWELL THOMAS

On May 30, 1916, the Third Squadron of the German High Sea Fleet lay on watch in the lower Jade Channel, which lies to the south of Helgoland. I was in command of a gun turret aboard S.M.S. *Kronprinz*. In the afternoon a signal was raised on the flagship:

"All commanders come aboard."

Little steam and motor launches went swarming.

The idleness of our beleaguered fleet had set our nerves on edge. There in France our comrades of the army were fighting and dying every day, and we of the navy were lying in harbor and kicking our heels. It seemed as though our dreadnaughts would never see any action. Any little variation from the daily round made the more optimistic of us hope that something exciting was going to happen at last.

The conference aboard the flagship continued for about an hour. Then the launches went speeding back to their various ships. We on the *Kronprinz* stood waiting with eager curiosity while our commander came aboard. He had a preoccupied air, said nothing to us, but went straight to his cabin.

"Once more—nothing happens," was the weary comment.

That night men were asleep or on guard, when at two o'clock drums and bugles rang out with a loud uproar:

"Clear the ship for action."

It sounded on all the vessels of the squadron.

"What is it? What are we going to do?" On all sides there were bewildered questions—but no answers.

Munition hoists were tried, the hydraulic apparatus for gun

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elevation examined, electrical firing devices tested, reserve munitions brought up, and heavy projectiles hurried to the turrets. The whole squadron got under way, steaming forth from the roadstead of Wilhemshaven.

It was an overwhelming picture in the gray light of dawn. Three or four flotillas of destroyers, ten boats each, steamed past us, their funnels belching mighty columns of smoke. The scout cruisers started moving slowly. Far out in Schlig Road you saw the battle cruisers weigh their anchors and spread out in broad formation. Swift torpedo boats surrounded and accompanied them. Slowly and deliberately our dreadnaught squadron unlimbered and swung into a single file and drew out of the channel, the *König*, *Kurfürst*, *Margraf*, and *Kronprinz*, our latest and strongest battleships. Off Cuxhaven the Second Dreadnaught Squadron steamed out in a great column and joined us. Under full power the battle fleet plowed its way north through the turbid waters of the North Sea.

We had never sallied out in such force. It was now clear to everybody that we were bent on forcing a major engagement with the enemy. We had been waiting impatiently for it during those dragging months since the war had begun, and now it was at hand.

Scout cruisers drew ahead and disappeared to the north. Battle cruisers followed them. Their combined forces were to get in touch with the enemy and draw him onto our main fleet. Our battleships steamed in formation ready for the shock of the fight. The North Sea was gray and misty that day. The tremendous smoke clouds discharged by our funnels made the atmosphere even more hazy.

At four o'clock in the afternoon a scout cruiser reported small enemy fighting units. The battle had begun. At four-thirty came the wireless message:

"German battle cruisers in action with British."

They were conducting a running fight south, drawing Beatty's battle-cruiser squadron after them. Our battleship fleet drove northward under all power to take a hand. Now

the issue of the day lies with our stokers and engineers. Down in the broiling heat of the hold they do their part magnificently. Funnels belch incredible quantities of smoke, and engines labor so hard that each ship trembles from stem to stern. Northward we drive.

I'll never forget that sight as I stood in my gun turret, binoculars glued to my eyes. Ahead were our battle cruisers. Each ship was screened by spouts of water surrounding it, spouts a hundred yards high. Like the flames of a torch appeared the flashes from the muzzles of their guns, each spurt of fire twice as long as the gun barrel itself, momentary vivid streaks appearing in the curtains of spouts and spray. The *Lützow*, carrying the flag of Admiral von Hipper, was in the lead. Her stem stuck out of the snow-white foam of the waves under her bow. The *Derfflinger*, *Seydlitz*, *Moltke*, and *Von der Tann* follow her. The five battle cruisers were firing broadsides, the full weight of their tremendous guns. The gray giants of the English come into view, *Lion*, *Princess Royal*, *Queen Mary*, *Tiger*, *New Zealand*, and *Indefatigable*. They, too, are firing with full broadsides. An incessant hollow roar sounds over the sea. At times you can see a shell burst on a deck.

The *Indefatigable* is the last ship of the enemy battle-cruiser line. She has been engaging salvos with the last ship of our line, the *Von der Tann*. Two tremendous broadsides from the *Von der Tann* strike her. A snake of fire runs along her gunwale. Two arms of flame arise straight up from her bulk. Then, with an instant transformation, ship and flame are changed into black smoke, which towers high in the air. We watch, aghast. This is the first time we have ever seen a warship blow up. It is a bewildered moment before we realize that the armored giant is torn to pieces and that everything above the water-line has been hurled high into the sky. The long black barrels of the cannon are seen somersaulting in mid-air. The huge store of oil is flung up and then rains down. It spreads upon the water and catches fire. Into this oceanic cauldron drops red-hot

fragments of steel with a hissing sound. For a long time a great ball of smoke hovers over the scene of disaster as if over the crater of a volcano. The space left by the former *Indefatigable* is at once filled by a sister ship which steams into the line. The *Von der Tann* takes the newcomer as her mark.

The fight between the battle cruisers goes on with neverlessening fury. The *Derfflinger* and *Seydlitz* combine their fire on the *Queen Mary*. They score a quick succession of hits and a second disaster befalls the enemy.

A few days after the fight I chanced to be talking with Captain von Egidy, commander of the *Seydlitz*.

"Tell me about the sinking of the *Queen Mary*," I asked.

"We had her under fire," he replied, "and I'll never forget the moment. It was at about six-thirty, when we were changing from echelon to line ahead in single file. I was following the maneuver of our ships, my eyes fixed on the flagship ahead. I was listening to the commands in the adjoining gunnery room—so far as it was possible to hear anything in the dreadful din made by our guns, which fired unceasingly. There was a sudden silence, as if the ship were holding its breath. Then from a gunnery observer, who has just found his voice, came in a sing-song, monotonous staccato:

"'Number three going up in the air.'

"The only response to this great news was the calm voice of Captain Richard Foerster, as precisely as though at a drill:

"'Shift aim to the right.'

"It was a splendid piece of coolness. Then we opened fire on the *Tiger*."

"But how did it look when the *Queen Mary* blew up?"

"My dear Luckner," he replied, "I told you I was maneuvering, with one eye on our flagship. When I glanced over at the enemy through the torpedo telescope my heart jumped to my throat. There, at a distance of ten miles, a huge immovable gray column stood up against the dull blue sky. It must have been two thousand feet across and ten thousand feet high. In its lower part black masses were whirling around. At the top,

like an aureole, were glowing, darting spurts of flame. Beside its base something like a torpedo boat was sliding along. A torpedo boat? No, it was number four of the enemy's line, the *Tiger*, but it seemed like a tiny boat beside that immense column, the remains of its exploded sister ship. The *Tiger* took its place where the *Queen Mary* had been and was showered with the falling steel fragments."

While the gigantic artillery duel has been going on between the battle cruisers, the torpedo boats on both sides have taken their part. The torpedo cruiser *Regensburg* comes into sight in front of the flagship of our battle-cruiser squadron. She leads two flotillas in full force. Enemy torpedo boats come forward to engage ours. A battle between the smaller craft develops between the lines of the larger ships, but it is a mere side show to the main spectacle.

At about seven o'clock our main line of battleships came into action and took the lead from the cruisers. The British plan had been to separate our two squadrons, herd our battle cruisers to the north, and destroy them with the fire of their largest ships. But they lost heavily in the attempt, and had failed. Von Hipper and Von Scheer had joined hands. The British battle cruisers were confronted by the whole German fleet. The salvos of the *König* and *Kaiser* classes resound over the water with a dreadful booming. The battleships carry heavier guns than any that had yet taken part in the action. The British battle cruisers are outranged and outgunned. Now to the larboard of the enemy line loom four gray giants, the heaviest ships of the Grand Fleet, the *Queen Elizabeths*. They had come to Beatty's rescue and attached themselves to his battle-cruiser squadron.

Now there was fire. The ocean seemed to rock with the explosions. We were showered with the 38 cm. projectiles of the enemy dreadnaughts. All around us rose columns of water at high as towers, as though the water was being sucked up into the sky. When a broadside flew over us the hum was like that of a fleet of airplanes. Our ships ran through the colossal barrage, shaking incessantly from the explosion of projectiles

in the water. The *Kurfuerst* and *Margraf* were hit. We could hear the violent explosions as shells struck them. But to our surprise they seemed not to be damaged or to lose any of their fighting strength. All through the battle our ships stood shell fire surprisingly well and kept on fighting when with similar hits the British ships had exploded. Our craft were coal burners, the British oil burners. In our ships the coal was packed all around their sides. It acted as a second layer of armor. A shell which pierced the armor might explode in a coal bunker and not necessarily do fatal damage. A similar hit on an oil-burning British ship would go straight into its vitals and probably explode the magazine.

We advanced with all our power. The *Warspite* is hit. Her rudder is damaged. She no longer obeys the helm. We concentrate fire on her. A white flash of flame bursts from her. She does not explode, but lists badly and has to leave the line. The air is very murky now. The enemy is becoming lost in haze. Out of the dingy mist a wreck appears for a moment. It is the *Invincible*, reduced to the condition of a derelict by our shell fire. The *Lützow* has been under heavy fire. Repeated enemy hits have pounded her. She has a bad list. Destroyers surround her with smoke screens in order to hide the wounded warrior from the enemy's fire. The *Seydlitz*, too, is damaged. Far off the small cruiser, the *Wiesbaden*, is seen listing over, enveloped with smoke. One gun is still firing. The enemy takes her under concentric fire. You can see their shells tearing away whole chunks of her. But she still floats. Her one remaining gun still fires. A stoker of the *Wiesbaden*, Zenne by name, had a harrowing experience. The ship sank, and he was one of a dozen men who lashed some beams together and made a raft and were left adrift on it. Night had fallen, and the sea was high. With every high wave the raft capsized and turned over and one or two of the men were lost. This kept on until only Zenne was left. He drifted on the raft for two days and two nights until a Norwegian steamer picked him up.

To the larboard three of John Bull's more ancient armored

cruisers suddenly appear. In less time than it takes to tell about it we get their range. Our salvos strike home. Up in the air go two of them with their armored hulls torn to pieces and clouds of smoke where formerly ships and men have been.

The climax of the battle now comes suddenly. Ahead on the horizon appears a semicircular sea of fire like a gas pipe with its row of little flames. The whole of the British fleet has entered the fight, the full line of Britain's superdreadnaughts, the mightiest sea force in the history of naval warfare. We are in an unfavorable position now, in danger of being crushed against the coast by this vastly superior force. We had sallied out, we had badly mauled the advance forces of the British, and now we were in danger of being cut off from our base by the main enemy force.

"Reverse all along the line!" came the command from Von Hipper.

With a terrific salvo to cover the maneuver, we reversed. The sea boiled like a kettle while the ships came around.

"Torpedo boats against the enemy!" Another order to cover our retreat.

The torpedo boats had been circling around the battleships. They turned and with bows high and sterns deep, like racing speed boats, they rushed toward the enemy. The intervening space of the sea, ten miles or so, now became spotted with exploding shells. The British battleships directed all their fire on the new foe. In the van of the attacking destroyers was Von Steinbrinck's flotilla, which many a time during the war had distinguished itself for its daring. Steinbrinck's boat was hit by a heavy projectile and plunged down. The destroyer just behind it, the *Rottenboot*, picked up the survivors, including the commander. On deck Von Steinbrinck waved his cap, still in command of his flotilla. Two, three, four shells strike the *Rottenboot*! She vanishes with all hands. Thus perished the brave Von Steinbrinck.

The torpedo attack served its purpose. It diverted the fire from our battleship squadron and enabled it to withdraw. It

was growing dark now. We steamed south to await a renewal of the battle in the morning.

Thinking that our entire deck must be strewn with shell fragments, I sent a sailor from my turret to gather some as souvenirs of the battle. He returned with an astonished exclamation:

"The British have been shooting cauliflowers at us!"

He had actually gathered an armful of cauliflowers. The atmospheric pressure caused by the heavy fire had burst the galley box. It happened to be full of cauliflowers, so the deck looked like a truck farm. Of shell fragments there were none. In imagination, inflamed by the excitement of the fight, we had felt the vessel shake a hundred times, but she actually hadn't been struck at all, in spite of the rain of projectiles through which we on the *Kronprinz* had sailed.

Our fleet held to a steady course all through that black night. The brilliant beams from our destroyer searchlights shepherded us and kept us together.

A blinding flash, like lightning. Then white flashes of fire shoot up. A long-drawn-out boom roars through the night. Our good old *Pommern*, an obsolete battleship, has been torpedoed. Not a man was saved.

A violent fire breaks out at the front of our fleet. Enemy destroyers which in the darkness have passed our entire battle line, have mistaken us for the British fleet. They are recognized by the *Westfalen* and immediately placed under the combined fire of the first squadron. Flames burst from oil tanks. Blazing oil covered the sea. It was a fearful sight, like a blazing boulevard of oil. Everything thundered, salvos from the big guns and exploding torpedoes.

Dawn was breaking when a searchlight signal flashed ahead. All eyes strained, and then our ship, the *Thuringia*, answered the signal with a full broadside. The *Euryalus* had mistaken us for the British fleet. What a sight it was to see her go up!

The day came but no renewal of the battle. We were in a favorable strategic position for it, and we hoped that the

British, although badly battered in the early action, would continue. We were eager for a decisive test of strength. But Jellicoe felt the weight of the British Empire on his shoulders. England had far more to lose than to gain by staking all on one throw. Jellicoe himself relates how, while spreading out his fleet in battle line, he saw a floating wreck ahead and at first took it to be a German ship. Only after inspecting it more closely through his marine glasses did he recognize it as the wreckage of his own once mighty battle cruiser, the *Invincible*. That was the kind of thing to dispose a man to caution.

Thus was fought the Battle of Jutland. We knew that the British losses had been heavy. We were astonished to find how small our own had been.

From the New York Times
Friday, March 10, 1916

GERMANY AT WAR WITH PORTUGAL

DENOUNCES SEIZURE OF SHIPS AND CALLS NATION VASSAL
OF ENGLAND

BREACHES OF NEUTRALITY

LONG LIST OF PROVOCATIONS UNDER WHICH, THE DECLARA-
TION SAYS, BERLIN WAS FORBEARING

FALSEHOOD ALSO CHARGED

SPANISH CABINET MEETS TO CONSIDER THE SITUATION
RESULTING FROM GERMAN-PORTUGUESE BREAK

Berlin, March 9 (by wireless to Sayville.)—Germany declared war on Portugal at 3:30 o'clock this afternoon and handed his passports to the Portuguese Minister.

"The German Government therefore considers herself from this time in war with the Portuguese Government" is the conclusion of the declaration handed by the German Minister at Lisbon to the Portuguese Government, and in Berlin to the Portuguese Minister, according to the official Overseas News Agency announcement.

"The German declaration," continues the News Agency, "emphasized the fact that this step was made necessary by the recent illegal seizure of German ships in Portuguese ports, which is the gravest sort of breach of neutrality and of special treaties. Germany, therefore, is obliged to give up her former attitude of forbearance, which she had maintained because of Portugal's awkward situation."

PART V
IN THE AIR AND UNDERGROUND

IN THE AIR AND UNDERGROUND

5

THE SILVER BALLOON

FROM

"MAN POSSESSED" BY WILLIAM ROSE BENET

*The soubrette's song still echoing in his ears,
The footlight dazzle still upon his eyes,
He craned to look, and saw the blinded skies
Yield what the searchlights sought. Great shafts like shears
Raked west and east. "How calm that beggar steers!"
He thought, appraising with but small surprise
The floating doom. Two aeroplanes like flies
Crawled up the stars . . . it seemed for years and years.*

*The searchlights dimmed. The four-point-sevens spoke,
The long bulk lurched a little, loosed a speck,—
And from the crowd fierce pandemonium broke.
He saw no bomb, no flare, no toppling wreck,
But—in his mind—Kensington Garden noons,
And an old woman selling toy balloons.*

GROUND MIST

FROM

"DOWN IN FLAMES" BY BEN RAY REDMAN

Not until he found himself alone, with Ypres five thousand feet beneath him, did he fully realize that he had escaped by a miracle. It was only one of many close shaves that he had known, but no other had been as close as this; and, without self-consciousness, he mentally thanked a God to whom he had not prayed for years. He had met odds before, he had been caught in pinching corners, and he had picked holes through trouble with the skill of a footballer navigating a broken field; but this was the first time that he had allowed two Fokkers to plant themselves fifty yards off his tail, and slightly above it, without abruptly resolving himself and his machine into something other than a sitting target. Looking at the shredded canvas, where hostile bullets had ripped it within a foot of his head on either side, he marvelled. He must have been day-dreaming to have let them sneak up on him like that; but of what he could not remember. On the other hand, he clearly recalled the thoughts, the astonishingly inconsequential thoughts, that had slipped through his mind during that brief conflict.

It seemed to him that when he had belatedly swung himself into action, he had worked his stick and his gun-trigger mechanically. With the speed and certainty of a muscular reaction he had manœvered his plane, seeking at once to dodge and to catch the enemy in his sights; but it had been the work of hands and eyes, not of the brain. His mind had scarcely been concerned in the affair at all, except indirectly. The thought of sudden death had seized upon it, for the first time in months of

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active fighting, and the mind had responded to this unexpected seizure in its own unpredictable way.

Probably it had been natural enough that he should think of his great-aunt and the neat little house in Croyden; the house in which so many years of a comparatively lonely childhood had been spent. It was the first house that he had known, and his great-aunt the only relative. She had seemed small to him when he was only ten, and now she seemed tiny. Indeed, she was tiny; an erect little figure jauntily carrying some eighty years; a fastidious little lady, fond of purple silk dresses, creamy old lace, and heavy gold brooches, who still spoke trippingly with a marked Edinburgh accent, although it was now more than thirty years since she had "moved south."

Yes, it was natural that he should think of her, for she was the person, of all people, whom he knew best and loved best; and it was wholly explicable that the tidy house with its iron gate, its trim front yard and its equally trim back yard, its immaculate curtains and its precisely arranged, pleasantly antiquated furniture, should at least momentarily seize his mind. He was glad, if he were about to die, that he could see the little house so clearly for the last time. And there was no aspect of it, no detail of its furnishings, that he could not visualize. Often he had thought amusedly that he might return to that same house after an absence of five years or more, enter it in the dark, and behave with as much assurance as though he were acting in broad daylight. No piece of furniture would have been moved; he could be sure of that. Once she had decided upon its proper place in the scheme of existence, his aunt never altered the position of anything. She was, as she frequently declared herself, a person who liked to have things just so.

Hugh Murray, then, could rely in his imaginings upon things being just so. He could play with the idea of entering his aunt's house at the inkiest of midnight hours, unexpected, unheralded; of walking straight into the drawing-room, directly to the corner cabinet, and abstracting therefrom, as easily as

though he could see it, the miniature of himself, painted when he was aged three and his hair was curly; the miniature that had been minutely inspected by his aunt but once, and thereafter deposited in the corner cabinet, never to be moved. He didn't like that miniature, he had never liked it; the thing was pink and yellow, sappy and silly. Perhaps he could get his aunt to hand it over to him during his next leave at home.

It was odd, perhaps, yet it was natural that these things—a little old lady, a Croyden villa, and a hated miniature of a child of three—should jostle one another in a human brain that automatic hands and eyes were seeking to save from annihilation thousands of feet above the shell-gutted Flanders earth. It was odd, yet it was natural.

But neither the Croyden villa, nor his great-aunt, nor the disliked miniature, was most prominent in Hugh Murray's mind during the moments when he believed that death, disguised as a couple of Fokkers, was hailing him across a gulf but fifty yards wide. The one thought that kept harrying his brain, insistently, repetitively, with only minor variations, was this: "Now Hobson will get the carpet, damn him; Hobson will get the carpet now, and it's my week for it. Damn his luck!"

Men aware that they are about to die review their whole lives within the brief space of a few brief seconds, we are assured. Murray had not found it so. Glimpses of a house and an aunt and a miniature had flitted across the screen of his consciousness, to be sure, and with them had flitted other incidental, fragmentary images; but the dominant picture was of a scanty strip of carpet, not more than one foot by three, a strip of worn green carpet, contemptible in itself, but in its present surroundings a symbol of the luxury that was Rome and the voluptuousness that was Egypt. It was, in short, the closest thing to a rug that could be found in the Nissen hut occupied by Hugh Murray and Grant Hobson; and it was a prize beyond price. Its possessor could place it by his bedside, sure that bare feet would rejoice in its comforting surface on

chill mornings; its possessor could stand smugly on it, last thing at night, before crawling towards sleep between thick blankets. It was a prize, indeed, and at first it had been a cause of battle, but now a sweet spirit of compromise encircled it. Murray had it one week, Hobson had it the next; for seven days Murray grinned condescendingly at his rugless hut-fellow, while the succeeding seven days heard Hobson making genial remarks about people who were too poor even to afford the ordinary comforts of home.

This was Murray's week for the rug, and the day was only Monday. But why, he wondered now, had it assumed such importance to him during those moments of supreme danger. A rug seemed a silly thing for a chap to be thinking about at a time like that. Of course, he and Hobson had pretended that it was far more important than it really was, and each had played up to the other in their struggle for it; but Murray didn't really give a hoot in hades whether he had the rug or not. Why then, why, had it so obtruded itself upon him? He could still hear himself saying to himself: "Damn him, Hobson will get the carpet now, and it's my week for it." Silly, wasn't it, with those Fokkers potting at him?

But, for that matter, how explain the other shreds and patches of remembered things and phrases that had tumbled through his mind while he had been trying to shake the Fokkers off? Funniest of all was the way that absurd French sign had cropped up. *On est prié de ne pas monter sur le siège avec les pieds*. He had come upon it in the W. C. of a Paris hotel, and it had struck him as ludicrously funny. So solemn! And why the devil would anybody want to mount on the seat with his feet? That seemed a curious form of sport. But there it was, a politely serious request. He had laughed at it, and it had stuck in his memory; and now, just now, when he had thought he was a goner, it had come back to him. It had been in the middle of a half-roll, to be precise; a half-roll into which he had desperately thrown his machine in the effort to shake off his pursuers. As the plane had turned upside down, centrifugal

force had thrown his feet hard against the rudder-bar, and at that very moment the phrase had returned to him:—*On est prié de ne pas monter sur le siège avec les pieds.*

At the same instant he regretted that he had obeyed the request. Why, now that he came to think of it, hadn't he mounted on the seat with his feet? It might have proved amusing; the very fact that they asked you not to do it indicated that it probably was amusing. And now he would never have another chance. Imagine dying without ever having mounted a *siège* with your *pieds*. It was a thing to be ashamed of, but fortunately no one would ever know. He would die knowing the truth himself; yes, but nobody else would know it. No one could say of him, with certainty, that he had never mounted a *siège avec les pieds*. And just as he had reached this point in the fantastic sequence of his reasoning, he realized that the two Fokkers which he had been mechanically fighting were no longer to be feared. They were, instead, no more than two interlocked wrecks of wood, steel and canvas, plunging earthward with two human beings caught in the tangled mass. The German pilots had been a trifle careless in their competitive eagerness. He had escaped by a miracle.

With his eyes sweeping a clear sky, Murray's muscles had relaxed. And then he had laughed aloud. He was going to have a chance after all, and he was going to take advantage of it. He was not going to die; instead, at the first possible moment, he was going straight to Paris, straight to that hotel in the rue de Richelieu, and then and there he was going to mount straight upon the seat with his feet. His escape was a portent, an omen, a command. It was his destiny; he was meant, indubitably meant, to mount a *siège* with his *pieds*. Neither man nor sign was going to say him nay. First, however, he was going to head for home; and he had headed.

But it was not until he was well over Ypres that he fully and soberly realized his luck. If those two infernal Fokkers had not collided, well . . . There was no use thinking about it. One thing was plain: he was not meant to die in the war, he

would probably live to be hanged. Which was quite all right, if he were allowed years enough before the hanging. There were so many things that he would like to do first; so many things that he would like to crowd into his life before it ended. A youngster who starts making war at nineteen is handicapped from the start; Murray, now aged twenty-three, knew that he would have to do a bit of hurrying to catch up with those who did not know what it was to have years requisitioned from their private existences. But it was nice to have a whole life to look forward to, to think that he was one of the ones who was going to come out of this mess alive.

For the past few months the conviction had been growing on him, and it was, he knew, a matured and reasonable conviction. It is the rule for youth to be wrapped securely in the conviction of its own immortality; only the middle-aged admit the existence of death, and only the old are aware of its hovering presence. But Murray's generation escaped the rule. They met death when they were as yet but tentatively acquainted with life; of their own mortality they were made suddenly and poignantly aware. Hugh Murray saw the youths he knew go out like candles in a gust of wind. At Beaulieu, down in Hampshire where he had his preliminary training, and up at the fighting school in Scotland, he watched one after another die, or kill himself, as the phrase went. He helped to gather them up in all stages of comparative obliteration, in stages that called for baskets or blotters. He did the slow march behind their bodies, with a black band slipped briefly over his tunic sleeve; he sat on courts of inquiry into the causes of their death, examined their effects, and carefully read their diaries to see if they were literature fit to be shipped home to wives, mothers and sisters; he missed them like hell for a while if they were his friends, and said "Poor chap," between drinks, if they were only acquaintances.

And always he kept wondering when his own turn would come. That it must come, that it was only a matter of time, was simple logic; there was no way out. If the war went on

long enough, he was sure to follow the others, and there was every reason to believe that the war would go on long enough. Indeed, it seemed the most permanent institution of an impermanent world: he had reached a point at which war and life were identified in his thinking; life without war seemed a contradiction in terms. But the months had passed and the years had passed, and Murray's turn had not come, and the nature of his conviction had been transformed. Gradually it had been borne home to him that he was one of those who were going to pull through. Twice he had been shot down by anti-aircraft fire, but on both occasions he had been high enough to put his plane down inside his own lines, and in both instances he had escaped injury. Regular periods on Home Establishment alternated with regular periods at the front, until Murray became used to being the senior pilot in any squadron in which he found himself. For more than a year he had been a captain and a flight commander; beyond that point, in the line of promotion, he did not wish to move, for the administrative duties of a major held no charm for him. He had been out to France on Tripes, Spads, Camels, and Dolphins; he was credited with his fair share of Huns, and he had his fair share of ribbons. But the friends that he had now were all new friends. That was the penalty he paid for being a survivor.

It was a small penalty for the reward that would come later. There were so many things that he wanted to do with his life, so many things that he was going to do. The mere chance to become acquainted with a warless world would be a tremendous adventure: he had been a boy when he had stepped out of peacetime England in 1914, he would be a man when he returned to it. And would it, he wondered, be very changed after the monstrous, incredible interval? Would he pick up his old ambitions where he had left them, or had he already lost them forever along with certain values that he had once thought cherishable. His position and his speculations, he reflected, were not so different from those of a man serving a prison term. By an effort he could remember what he had left behind;

but he could only guess vaguely at what he would return to. Some things were certain. There was a trust fund that assured him the leisure for doing anything he wished to do; he would undoubtedly collect great quantities of books and do some writing; he would travel, he would play a great deal of golf, and there were the delightful and mysterious possibilities of marriage to be considered. Fate had decreed that Hugh Murray, at the age of twenty-three, should know quite a little about French women and almost nothing about English girls. The latter subject was one in which he promised himself pleasant and serious specialization. It was a good thing for a man to have a wife; gave him a sense of responsibility and stopped him batting about. Besides, he was quite sure he wanted to have children. Having been practically unattached to the preceding generation, he was unconsciously eager to link himself to the succeeding one.

He looked down. Realizing that he had left Ypres behind some minutes before, he looked down for the familiar landmark of Poperinghe; but he did not see it. Instead he saw a white mist that lay upon the earth like a fluffy impenetrable blanket, hiding houses and rivers and clumps of trees and hills. Odd that it could have smothered the land so suddenly, but the fog sometimes rolled in from the channel with amazing swiftness; and he had been day-dreaming again. It was unimportant, for he knew exactly where he was. Anyway, it was probably a low fog, and Cassel Hill would be poking its head through the top of it. Once he had located the hill, he could put his plane down on the 'drome with his eyes shut.

His next leave was due in another month, and he was going to put in for Paris this time. His aunt would be disappointed, of course, but he couldn't help that; after all, he had been pretty faithful to the old lady and she had no cause for complaint. Not that she ever would complain, she was too proud. But he would be back on Home Establishment in another three months, teaching the young idea how to shoot *and fly*, and then her eyes could have their fill of him. During which time he

was going to get that miniature and subject it to a primitive but exceedingly effective form of art criticism.

He looked at the watch on the instrument board in front of him. It was 4 o'clock, which meant he had been up a little over an hour and three-quarters. In other words, he had petrol enough in his tank for a quarter of an hour at least, and enough more in his reserve for an extra fifteen minutes. There was nothing to worry about there. Banking gently right and left, staring down at the soft cloud blanket, he jogged easily along with his Hispano sweetly turning over at 2,000 revs. It was clouding up overhead now, and the sun was blanketed too. It was chilly; he hunched his shoulders under his flying suit. The mess would see him putting away a double brandy and soda just about five minutes after he touched the floor.

Paris, he suppose, would logically mean Simone again; but that affair had already become a little too serious to be quite comfortable. The first, fine, careless rapture had somehow slipped out of it; the woman's letters sounded as though they were trying to secure him with all the hooks she could, and he didn't like it. If he didn't watch himself it would be tiny garments next. But he wasn't going to let Simone keep him away from Paris; that would be silly, the city was big enough for both of them. He simply wouldn't let her know he was coming. It was a hundred to one shot against meeting accidentally, and if they did he could always say that he had just arrived that morning and was planning to surprise her that evening. She would believe him; she believed everything he told her. It was easy enough to manage women once you knew how, but discretion was sometimes the best policy. He could have an excellent time in Paris without Simone; in fact, she had proved a little too motherly the last time, and he, who had never known a mother, resented it. He could get along without her very well, but Paris it must be, for his destiny called him. Had he not been spared that very afternoon, but a few minutes ago, for a great work? It was his duty, his privilege: Paris summoned

him for no less glorious purpose than to mount a *siège* with his *pieds*.

But where was Cassel Hill? He must be pretty close to it now, and yet he couldn't see it; the ground mist was a good thick fog after all, and it was deeper than he had thought. He would have to nose his way gently through it and look things over. He had slipped down from five to two thousand feet already; now he would have to go lower and take a look.

When his altimeter showed three hundred feet, his under-carriage was brushing curling whisps of the fluffy blanket; it was almost as though he were racing in a sleigh across an endless expanse of greyish snow. Very wet snow, too; chilly and wet. That drink would hit the spot. Once he could find a break in this expanse, even a small hole momentarily torn in the blanket by a current of air, he would know exactly where he was; just a glimpse of the land below and he would know, for there wasn't a patch of the country for miles around that was unfamiliar to him. But for the moment there was guidance neither from below nor from above. The sun was lost behind dark clouds; he thought he knew where it should be, but he couldn't swear to it, and as usual his compass was not functioning. He hadn't had it corrected for weeks.

Hugh Murray knew, however, that he had as sure a guide as landmark, sun or compass; and that was his own curious sixth sense which enabled him to find his way home in rain, fog, or dark as certainly as though he were flying with the sun at his back and the country spread out like a familiar map in front of him. It was a strange gift, and one that he was apt to mention modestly after the fourth drink. He became very contemptuous of compasses and pilots who worried about their accuracy. His sixth sense made them superfluous. "Apparently the same instinct as a homing pigeon"; was the way he phrased it, "nothing superhuman, just sub-human. I simply tootle along for a while, drop down through clouds, and there I am, right above the 'drome. Funny, isn't it? No trick at all. Easy as this." And he would gulp what remained of his current drink.

This time he knew that he must be very close to the aerodrome. If he wasn't mistaken, Cassel Hill was over there on his right, which meant that the 'drome was between him and the hill. His best plan was to circle widely and slowly, waiting for a break in the fog. He circled.

One thing that he couldn't understand about the business with Simone was the attitude of her parents. He had been terrified when she had first suggested taking him to see them in the little house at Orgeval, but finally he had let her have her way. Wonder of wonders. She had exhibited him as proudly as she would a brand new husband, and they had seemed to be as well pleased with him as though he were a brand new husband. His embarrassment had been acute to begin with, but gradually he had accustomed himself to the situation, and after drinking Médoc and discussing the military situation for an hour or two with papa Gemier, he had felt perfectly at home. When they left, papa Gemier insisted on their taking along two bottles of wine, and mamma Gemier had loaded them down with a cheese, a jar of thick cream, and a basket of wild strawberries. Hugh Murray had left in a daze. There had been other visits to Orgeval after that and he had developed an honest liking for what he referred to as his family-out-of-law; but the subtle change that had been taking place in Simone's attitude worried him. Once she began hinting at marriage, he would find mamma and papa hinting too, and the situation would become intolerable. Much better let the affair taper off gradually. It could probably be done without any one being hurt. Simone was a buoyant and sensible creature.

He was circling steadily, looking for a break in the fog; and there was no break. He had been circling for almost five minutes now; but he was sure that he was almost over the 'drome, so if he held his position he would be all right. The fog would certainly show him a loophole before he ran out of petrol, and, if worst came to worst, he could undoubtedly put her down somehow with a dead prop.

The thing to do was to write to his aunt that evening, and break the news about his taking Paris leave again as gently as possible. Of course, he could lie to her and say that all leaves were being cancelled as a result of the big push, but he didn't like to do that. He would simply say that he felt an urge towards Paris, and she would understand; she had been there once as a girl, over sixty years ago, and she was still eloquent at mention of the city.

This circling didn't seem to be getting him anywhere; he was wasting his time. The only thing to do was to ease his way gently down through the fog to see if he couldn't get under it. As a rule they didn't hug the floor so closely that you couldn't get under them; sometimes they did, but they were rare exceptions. He wasn't going to waste his time buzzing around up there any more. He wanted that drink. But he was going to be careful.

Gliding into the fog was like gliding into the steam room of a Turkish bath, except that the vapour was chill instead of hot. It filled his eyes and nose and throat; only by strained peering could he see the instruments. The altimeter showed two hundred feet. Down he went, cautiously, slowly, with engine throttled back, feeling his way along, fumbling his way through the dense layers of the soaking blanket. When he reached a hundred feet he knew that he had gone about as far as he dared go; the instrument was not accurate enough to be trusted beyond that point. Some day they might make altimeters that would show you your height within a few feet, but they hadn't made them yet. And still he hadn't found the bottom of the blanket. He would nose her down just a trifle more, and then if he couldn't see daylight he would climb out of the mess.

It was by two instant, instinctive movements that Murray jammed his throttle wide open and pulled back his stick for a sudden zoom when something dark and massive surged out of the mist in front of him. He calculated that he had missed it by inches, but what it was he couldn't say. It might have been a house, it might have been a tree, it might have been a hangar,

it might have been Cassel Hill itself. He didn't know; he only knew that it had loomed large, dark and solid, and that he had missed it. Squinting at his instruments, holding his machine on an even keel in the damned fog, he was climbing now for all he was worth; and a hammer was pounding against his ribs. Two escapes as close as that in one afternoon was a bit thick. "Be still, my beating heart, be still," he chanted. "You were born to be hanged, my lad, you were born to be hanged." He had trusted that wretched altimeter a little too far; it had still showed almost a hundred feet, and he must have been right down on the floor. Lord, how good the light and air seemed when he climbed out of that choking fog. He wasn't going to try that little experiment again in a hurry. Once he had his bearings he would try another game. The fog couldn't go on forever, so he would head towards St. Omer until he came to the end of it, and then land in the first decent field he saw. He still had plenty of petrol, enough for at least twenty minutes. St. Omer must be over there. He swung his plane around.

The chances were that he would be able to dodge Simone in Paris, and he was sure that he could have a perfectly good time without her, but it was going to seem rather strange. He had got used to Simone, and he would miss her; he would miss the simple comforts of their domestic arrangements. When he was with her everything seemed so nicely settled and established. Perhaps she had become more necessary to him than he realized; and it might be, too, that he was misjudging her. Perhaps she was not trying to get any hooks in him after all. It was perfectly natural that she should talk about their life together and talk as though it were a permanent affair; they had been very, very happy, and there was no reason why she shouldn't remind herself, and him, of the fact; no reason why she shouldn't assume that they were going to go on being happy. He was probably foolishly suspicious; marriage might never have entered her head. And yet something made him wary. He would have to think about it, seriously.

On he flew in the direction, he believed, of St. Omer; and still

the blanket of fog unrolled itself beneath him. This was becoming ridiculous. He had switched on his reserve tank and had probably just about begun to draw on it, so he had a full fifteen minutes in which to make up his mind what he was going to do. There wasn't much sense in spending it flying away from the aerodrome; if he couldn't find a clear spot anywhere, he would be far better off near home. Besides, he didn't want to wait for that drink. But it did make him feel a bit of a fool, being stuck up there and not being able to get down. Perhaps he was going to turn into a kind of aerial Flying Dutchman and just wander about the skies forever. That was a pretty idea, but he couldn't wander very far without petrol. So it was back across that grey, billowing waste again, back towards home. At least his sixth sense was still with him.

Something made him wary. If he should get matrimonially entangled with Simone it would probably ruin his life, or at least a good part of it. She was as sweet as she could be, attractive and admirable in many ways, but she simply wasn't the kind of girl he could marry. Seemed stupid, but it was so. And he had to think of the future.

He must be almost over the aerodrome again, and this time something had to be done; it was absurd not being able to land through this fog. He was going to land. If he saw that he couldn't make it, he would pull up and try again. He still had petrol.

His engine coughed furtively once or twice, choked openly, and then fell silent. Apparently he had been wrong about that reserve tank being full. He had no more petrol.

The propeller had stopped turning, and there it stood, stiff and straight and motionless in front of him; the silence seemed singularly oppressive after the engine's roar, and the fog felt wetter than ever as it enveloped him. This time there would be no argument about it, he was landing whether he wished to or not. Glide gently, glide gently. Gently does it. Probably it was just as well that this had happened; he would have gone on fooling around until he ran out of petrol anyway. Now he

would get his drink all the sooner, and he must tell them in the mess about his momentous decision to mount a *siège* with his *pieds*. He would demand that they drink a toast to the great enterprise; he must feel that he had the squadron behind him. Perhaps he was being unduly suspicious about Simone; she was a sweet thing. Still, he felt the situation was tricky. His aunt would be disappointed, but she would understand. He wondered if he could persuade her to give up that miniature. On to Paris, on to the rue de Richelieu. *On est prié de ne pas . . .*

Again it was with an instinctive movement that Murray pulled back his stick for a sudden zoom when something dark and massive surged out of the mist in front of him; but this time there was no engine to lift the plane. And it did not lift. The crash was deafening, but Hugh Murray only felt it without hearing it; and he felt it for no more than the fraction of an instant before all feeling and all life were crushed out of him.

The crash was so deafening that they heard it in the mess and all came running, some with glasses still in their hands; for it was B Flight hangar that he had hit. To the last his curious sixth sense had not betrayed him.

THE WAR UNDERGROUND

FROM

"BOURRU, SOLDIER OF FRANCE" BY JEAN DES VIGNES ROUGES

(Translated by Ernest Hunter Wright)

The one idea of Flament, the sapper, was to dig fast. You, too, in his place, would not have thought of much else. As soon as you are at the bottom of that tunnel, less than a yard deep and about as wide, you want to get out of it. Just imagine! forty yards of earth on top of you! You cannot fancy the feeling it gives you! Oh, I know, of course, that as soon as you think of the sapper in his underground hole you shudder and say, "Yes, I see it all—it's horrible."

And you close your eyes the better to conjure up the sensations of one scratching away forty yards under the earth. Ah, no! you do not see it all. In vain you envelop your soul in a great shroud of shadows and of silence; in vain your flesh creeps at thought of the dank chill, your arms move instinctively to ward off the falling clods, your bosom heaves as though struggling against suffocation—useless efforts! All these exertions of the imagination do not make you feel what it is to have forty yards of earth over your head; it is heavy, crushing, terrible! One is confined here like an old man who has reached the low grounds toward which he has been traveling for a hundred years of life, but who is still looking back toward those heights of the past, the sunlit days of his youth.

In proportion as the descent is made into the shaft, so narrow that a fat man could not get through it, the impression grows that the strata of earth are weighing down one upon another. Ten yards down we are still in the shaft, which is made of a clay as hard as rock; thence a passage through which we have to crawl brings us to another shaft. Climbing down the

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rope ladder we traverse another zone lined with a moist, black clay. The clamorous life of the upper day is already far behind! Deeper yet, we cross the belt of green sand; and then, at last, forty yards down, we find ourselves—little moving objects lost in the immensity of inert matter—in the upper section of the Jurassic stratum. A vague, superstitious fear seizes the most skeptical minds. What if it be living, this matter upon whose eternal silence we are intruding! And who knows? Our presence might, perhaps, enrage mysterious forces here. These successive beds of clay that your pick is attacking—if you should disturb their equilibrium a landslide might follow and drag us down to the depths of some subterranean gulf. True, the tunnel is “boxed in,” that is to say, boarded with strong planks, but what a pitiful bulwark against these mighty masses, dense and rugged, which are pulled incessantly toward the center of the globe!

Ah, that sullen force of nature lying constantly in wait for you; like a menace, the miner senses it on his bosom, on his back, and in his limbs.

Is it that, or the lack of oxygen, which is the cause of that uneasiness from which Flament suffers so much that, against his will, he stops from time to time to breathe deeply?

Behind him Surelle is putting the loose earth into the sacks.

“One more hour of grubbing, old man, and our job will be done.”

Suddenly Flament’s pick sinks into a bit of earth which gives way easily; a black hole appears in the glimmering light of the candle.

“Hello, a fissure,” thinks the sapper, for he has learned that at the beginning of the Jurassic stratum there sometimes exist huge hollow spaces dating from the epoch of the great geological disturbances.

But you have to be careful—it may be a tunnel of the enemy. Who knows? They have heard something and are lying in wait, perhaps. Flament puts out his candle and listens—but hears not a sound. It must be a natural fissure. He en-

larges the hole and can now pass his head through it; but it is not yet wise to light the candle. He stretches out his arm in the dark but touches nothing. However, he must see.

"Strike a match, and put it out right away," is Surelle's advice.

Flament has seen. No doubt about it—it is an enemy tunnel; on the opposite wall there were traces of the pick. What danger may this hole be hiding? Is it occupied? Isn't it near a mine ready to go off?

"It doesn't look good to me," Surelle agrees. "Let's get Lieutenant Montazeau."

The lieutenant arrives. He has taken off his boot, for the soles might scrape along the planks and make a noise; he advances on all fours in the narrow tunnel. Do not try to see him; it is darker here than you have ever imagined. Beside you, behind, before, the darkness is like a huge mass; you seem to be moving through a yielding substance; sight is a superfluous sense; your whole being is concentrated in the faculty of hearing; you close your eyes to hear the better.

"Can you hear the digging close by, lieutenant?" says Flament, who is following the officer.

Ah! that terrible nightmare of the "toc, toc" of the enemy's pick! It continually hammers upon the ear of the miner, like throbbing pulse-beats. It has to be banished by sheer will-power or it would nail him to the spot, motionless, silent, breathless, doomed to listen indefinitely without ever knowing whether it be reality or an illusion which thus unmans him. Possibly the enemy sapper, absent a moment ago, has returned and resumed his work. But no—not a sound.

At last Lieutenant Montazeau arrives at the end of the tunnel. He feels around; yes, here is, indeed, a hole measuring half a yard. Very gently he passes his head through it, looks about, and listens. Nothing but shadows and silence. The electric flashlight reveals the tunnel.

"Go quick, and tell some one to bring a charge; we must plant a blast. I'll stay here."

The order was but the reflex act of a good sapper. Is an enemy's tunnel discovered. Quick! build a mine-chamber, a wall of sand bags in front, the charge of explosives leaned against the wall, then a good wadding of sand-bags behind, a layer of melinite which reaches to the top of the chamber, a fuse—and there you have an enemy's tunnel mined; that is to say, torn to pieces.

But this is no rapid operation. While the soldiers are going back for the explosives and the sand-bags, the lieutenant remains. Peering into the enemy's tunnel he reconnoiters with care—greatly excited. What luck! but also what a risk! It is impossible that the Boches will not soon discover the inroad on their tunnel, for they are sure to make frequent rounds.

An hour passes. The lieutenant listens and watches, too, for a light may possibly appear. Hark! What is that? Shining circles are dancing in the darkness—is it mere hallucination? You can tell by rubbing your eyes. But the lights are still there.

This time it is, indeed, real; there, perhaps thirty feet away, a light passed at the end of the tunnel and human shapes crept along. The German petty-officer is making his rounds. He is going to visit the branch where the lieutenant is listening. In fact, the light, which seemed to be disappearing down a transverse tunnel, is returning. A discussion follows. Are they going to come? Yes? No?

Yes. Now the lieutenant sees the light making its way towards him; soon he makes out the German's face, red in the lamp-light and glistening with sweat—for it is hot in here. The lieutenant, too, is warm; he has thrust an arm through the hole and is holding his revolver pointed at the enemy, with the butt against the earth. The Boche is still coming on, with two men following behind him. There is nothing to do but shoot. It is horrible to kill a man this way; here it is eighteen months that the lieutenant has been waging war underground, but one would never guess it—he is almost trembling. His head is indiscernible against the wall of the tunnel—half

a yard more and the Boche will see him. He, too, has a revolver.

Over their heads, forty yards up, there is calm day; neither grenades nor trench-mortars are at work. From the bottom of the trench the poilus are watching the swallows wheeling gracefully in the sunlight. Not one of the birds is troubled in his happy life. Down below, the Boche is gasping his last; the two men who were following him are fleeing like frightened rats and the lieutenant is yelling out orders.

"Hurry up! Bring the sacks of cheddite! . . . There are only six—never mind; it's enough. Come on! Stuff it in!"

And the sacks of explosive are dumped headlong into the enemy's tunnel—beside the Boche, who is still groaning. Quickly the fuse is placed, at the opening of the pit; forty yards above, a non-commissioned officer touches it off, while the lieutenant wipes his brow as though waking from a bad dream.

The shock was not even discernible, so tiny had been the charge! It required an effort of the imagination to believe that, down below, the body of a man was firmly wedged in the earth, to sleep there through the centuries—unless another explosion should come to shatter it and mingle it still more closely with the soil.

FEAR

BY JAMES WARNER BELLAH

It was a little spot, that fear, but it had ached in his heart for months—ever since his first solo flight at Upavon Air-drome. It had come suddenly one morning like the clean pink hole of a steel-jacketed bullet—a wound to be ashamed of—a wound to fight against—a wound that never quite healed. Always it was there to throb and to pinch like the first faint gnawing of cancer. It came with him to the theatre and rankled his mind: "Enjoy this—it may be your last play." It crept into his throat at meals, sometimes, and took away the poor savour that was left to the foods of wartime.

The fear of the men who fly. Sometimes he pictured it as an imp—an imp that sat eternally on his top plane and questioned him on the strength of rudder wires, pointed to imaginary flaws in struts, suggested that the petrol was low in the tank, that the engine would die on the next climbing turn.

It was with him now as the tender that was to take him up to his squadron jolted and bounced its way across the *pavé* on the outskirts of Amiens. The squadron was the last place he had to go to. All the months that were gone had led up to this. These were the wars at last. This was the place he would cop it, if he was to cop it at all.

He shrugged. Anyway he had had his four days in London and his ten days idling at Pilot's Pool before the squadron sent for him. He braced one shoulder against the rattling seat and reached in his tunic pocket for a cigarette. Mechanically he offered one to the driver. The man took it with a grubby finger.

"Thankee, sor-r."

He nodded and lighted both cigarettes with the smudge of

his pocket lighter. Anyway, he was not flying up to 44. That was one flight saved. Funny, that fear—how it came and went like the throb of a nerve in an open tooth. Sometimes the spot was large, and filled his whole being; then again it would shrink to a dull ache, just enough to take the edge from the beauty of the sunrise and the sparkle from the wine of the moon.

There had been a time when it had jumped in every fibre of his soul. He had been a cadet officer then, with only twelve solo hours in the air, under the old rough-and-tumble system of learning to fly. Spinning at that time was an unsolved mystery to him, a ghastly mystery that had meant quick death in a welter of blood, flecked with splinters. Fred McCloud had gone that way, and Johnny Archambault. For weeks afterward, Johnny's screams had rung in his ears like a stab of pain, until the mere smell of petrol and fabric dope made the fear crawl into his throat and strangle him. Somehow he had kept on with the rest, under the merciless scourge that lashed one on to fly—and the worse fear of seeing cold scorn in the eyes of the men who taught the lore of thin cloud miles.

The tender twisted and dodged along the hard mud ribbon that ran like a badly healed cicatrix across the pock-scarred face of the fields. Gnarled and bleak, they were fields that had held the weight of blood-crazed men—still held them in unmarked graves, where they had fallen the year before under the steel flail. He had heard stories from his older brother about those fields—the laughing brother who had gone away one day and returned months later without his laugh, only to go away again, not to come back. He had seen pictures in the magazines—— But somehow no one had caught their utter bleakness as he saw it now.

The riven boles of two obscene trees crouched and argued about it on the lead-gray horizon, tossing their splintered arms and shrieking, he fancied, like quarrelling old women in the lesser streets of a village. Close to the roadway, there were a torn shoe and a tin hat flattened like a crushed derby. Poor

relics that even salvage could see no further use in. Farther off, a splintered caisson pointed three spokes of a shattered wheel to the sky, like a mutilated hand thrown out in agony. He was seeing it for himself now.

No one could smile at the cleanness of his uniform again and say, "Wait till you get out. When I was in France ——" He was out himself now. In a day or so he would go over the line with loaded guns. His instructors at the training 'drome—thin-jawed men with soiled ribbons under their wings—had done no more, and some of them had done less. The thought braced him somewhat. They had seemed so different—so impossible to imitate—those men. Their war had always been a different one from his; a war peopled with vague, fearless men like Rhodes-Moorehouse and Albert Ball and Bishop, the Canadian; men who flew without a thought for themselves.

It occurred to him with a start that theirs was the same war as his now. Twenty-five miles ahead of him, buried somewhere in rat runs, between Bapaume and Cambrai, it went on and on, waiting for him to come—waiting to claw and maim and snuff him out when he did come. It had seemed so far away from him in England. When he was at ground school he had seen it as a place where one did glorious things—he was young, pitifully young—a place that one came back from with ribbons under one's wings, with nice clean scratches decently bandaged. And he had been slightly offended at his brother's attitude—at the things his brother had said of the staff. Then he had gone to Upavon to learn to fly. He had soloed for the first time, and the spot of fear had crawled into his own heart.

They were rattling into the broken streets of a tottering town; a town that leered at them and grimaced through blackened gaps in its once white walls. There was a patched-up *estaminet* with a tattered yellow awning that tried bravely to smile.

"Albert," said the driver.

The new pilot nodded. Some sapper officers were loitering in the doorways of the café. Their uniforms were faded to a

rusty brown and reenforced with leather at the cuffs and elbows. Their buttons were leather, too, to save polishing, and their badges were a dull bronze. He looked down at his white Bedford-cord breeches and the spotless skirts of his fur-collared British warm—privileges of the flying corps that men envied. Baths, clean clothing, and better food. The P.B.I.'s idea of heaven. They called flyers lucky for their privileges and cursed them a little bit for their dry beds and the wines they had in their messes, miles behind the line.

The new pilot wondered if they knew what it meant to be alone in the stabbing cold with no one to talk to, no one to help you, nothing between you and the ground save a thin, trembling fabric of cloth and wire and twenty thousand feet of emptiness. That was his fear—emptiness—nothingness—solitude. Those men under the awning could die in company. Not so himself—alone, screaming into the cloud voids, with no one to hear, no one to help, staring with glazed eyes and foam-flecked lips at the emptiness into which one hurtled to death miles below. The price one paid for a bath! He remembered seeing Grahame-White fly at Southport before the war. People had called him an intrepid aviator. The new pilot laughed harshly inside his throat and stared out across the bare fields.

The car topped a slight rise and turned sharply to the left. The driver pointed his grubby finger. "They be comin' in from afternoon patrol," he said. "Yonder is airdrome."

There were three flat canvas hangars painted a dull brown, and a straggling line of rusty tin huts facing them from across the narrow landing space—like a deserted mining village, shabby and unkempt. As he watched, he saw the last machine of the afternoon patrol bank at a hundred and fifty feet and side-slip down for its landing. In his heart he could hear the metal scream of wind in the flying wires. A puff of black smoke squirted out in a torn stream as the pilot blipped on his engine for one more second before he came into the wind and landed. By the time the tender rolled up to the dilapidated squadron office, the machine had taxied into the row of hangars and the

pilot was out, fumbling for a cigarette with his ungloved hands. A thin acrid smell of petrol and carbonized castor oil still hung in the quiet air between the shabby huts. Snow in large wet flakes commenced to fall slowly, steadily.

The new pilot climbed down from the tender, tossed his shoulder haversack beside his kit bag, and pushed open the door of the squadron office. The adjutant was sitting on his desk top, smoking and talking to someone in a black leather flying coat and helmet—someone with an oil-streaked face and fingers still blue and clumsy from the cold.

"Paterson, sir, G. K., second lieutenant, reporting in from Pilot's Pool for duty with the 44th."

The adjutant raised a careless finger in acknowledgment. "Oh, yes. How do? Bring your log books?"

"Yes, sir."

"Chuck 'em down. D'ye mind?"

Paterson laid them upon the desk top, still standing to attention. The adjutant smiled. "Break off," he said. "We're careless here. This isn't cadet school."

The new pilot smiled and relaxed. "Very good, sir."

"That's better," said the adjutant; "makes me feel more comfortable. Just give me a note of yourself now." He reached for a slip of paper. "G. K. Paterson, Two Lt. Next of kin?" Paterson gave his father's name. "Age?"

"Eighteen and four twelfths."

"Good!" said the adjutant. "You'll find an empty cubicle in B Block—that's the middle line of huts. You're lucky. Roof only leaks in three places. I'll have your duffel trekked over shortly."

The man in the flying coat blew upon his numbed fingers and smiled. "I'm Hoyt," he said. "Skipper of C Flight. I'm going to take you now, before A gets after you." He turned to the adjutant. "That's all right, isn't it, Charlie? Tell 'em I intimidated you." He grinned.

The adjutant shrugged. "Righto!"

"Come on," said Hoyt. "I'm in your hut block. I'll show you your hole."

They went out into the snow flurry. Mechanics were fussing in little knots around the five tiny machines that had just landed, lining them up, refilling them, and trundling them into the brown musty hangars.

"Le Rhône Camels," said Hoyt. "We've just been over around Cambrai taking a look-see."

Inside one of the hangars, as they passed, Paterson saw something that drew a thin, wet gauze across his eyeballs. On a rough bench just beside the open flap sat a man with his eyes closed and his lips drawn tightly into a straight bluish line. His flying coat was rolled up behind his head for a pillow, and his tunic had been unbuttoned and cut away from his left shoulder. The white of his flesh showed weirdly in the gloom, like the belly of a dead fish. Just below the shoulder, the white was crumpled and reddened as if a clawed paw had been drawn across it. One man was holding his other hand, while another probe and cleaned and dabbed with little puffs of snowy cotton that turned quickly to pink and then to a deep brown.

Hoyt shrugged. "Lucky man. That's Mallory. He was Number Four this afternoon. We never saw a thing. Just happened. Funny." And he smiled. "That's why I was so keen to get you. Can't tell how long it will be before Mallory gets around again, and I've got one vacancy in the flight already." He shrugged. "You'll see a lot of that here—get used to it. It doesn't mean a thing as long as you get back alive."

Paterson looked at him sharply. He wanted to ask him how many didn't get back alive. He wanted to know what had caused the other vacancy in the flight. But people didn't ask those things. People merely nodded casually and went on.

"I suppose not," he said. They tramped on across the air-drome.

"Here we are," said Hoyt. He kicked open the hut door and groped down the dark passageway, with Paterson after him.

Presently he pushed back another door and yanked at a tattered window curtain.

The new pilot saw a tiny room, with two washstands, a cot, a folding chair, and a cracked mirror. In a corner were his kit bag and haversack. He pulled out his own cot and chair and set them up; meanwhile Hoyt threw himself down on the other cot and let his cigarette smoke dribble straight upward into the gloom of the pine-raftered roof. Presently he spoke.

"This is a queer war," he said; "full of queer things, and the queerest of these is charity." He laughed in the darkness, and the tip of his cigarette became suddenly pink as he drew the smoke into his lungs. "What was your school?"

"Winchester," said Paterson.

"Right," said Hoyt. "Remember your first day? This is it over again. They've fed you up on poobah at your training 'drome and down at the Pool. They always do. It's part of the system. Just take it for what it is worth and forget the rest. If you want to know anything, come to me and I'll tell you as well as I can. I've been here three months. When I came, I came just as you did to-day, pukka green and afraid to the marrow—afraid of uncertainty. You get over that shortly.

"Our job is a funny one, and we're not here for ourselves, and we're not here to be heroes or to get in the newspapers. The V.C.'s are few and far between." He raised himself upon his elbow. "I'm not preaching self-abasement and a greater loyalty to a cause that is right, mind you. I don't know anything about causes or who started the war or why, and I don't care. I'm preaching C Flight and the lives of five men.

"You saw Mallory over at the hangar. It was teamwork that put him there in his own M.O.'s hands. Not much, perhaps"—the cigarette described a quick arc in the darkness—"just a slight closing in of the formation—a wave of somebody's hand—somebody else dropping back and climbing above him to protect his tail from any stray Huns that might've waylaid him on the way home. That's what I mean. 'Esprit de

corps' is a cold, hard phrase. Call it what you like. It's the greatest lesson you learn. Never give up a man." Hoyt laughed. "They call me an old woman. Perhaps I am. Take it or leave it.

"Slick up a bit and come into my hutch while I scrape off the outer layer of silt. Dinner in half a tick and I'm as filthy as a pig." He vaulted up from the cot and punched his cigarette out against the sole of his boot. At the door he paused for a moment.

"Ever have wind up?" he asked casually.

Paterson stiffened against the question and the small spot of fear danced within him. "No," he said firmly. Hoyt shrugged. "Lucky man." And he went out into the passageway.

At dinner he met the rest of the squadron and the other men in C Flight. Mallory, very pale, with his arm slung in a soft pad of bandages, sat beside him. They were coming for him later to take him down to the base hospital. Phelps-Barrington sat on the other side of Mallory, mourning the fact that the wound was not his, that he might get the inevitable leave to follow. Phelps-Barrington took Paterson's hand with a shrug and asked how Marguerite was in Amiens. "What? You didn't meet Marguerite on your way through? 'Struth!" MacClintock sat across the table beside Hoyt—MacClintock, too young to grow a moustache, but with a deep burr that smelled of the heather in the Highlands and huge pink knees under his Seaforth kilts, muscles like the corded roots of an oak. The other man in the flight, Trent, was down with mild flu. He was due back in a week or so from hospital.

There was a wild argument on about the dawn patrol the next morning. Paterson listened to the fragments of talk that flew like sabre cuts across the glasses:

"He's in a red tripe. I don't give a damn for Intelligence. Saw him this morning myself. Same machine Mac and I had that brush with down at Péronne."

"The next time they'll get an idea for us to strafe a road clear to Cologne for them. What are we—street cleaners?"

"So I let go a covey of Coopers and turned for home. They had it spotted for a battery over at 119 Squadron. I saw the pictures. Right pictures, but wrong map squares as usual. That crowd can't tell a battery from a Chinese labour-corps inclosure. I'd rather be a staff officer than a two-seater pilot."

"Steward, a whisky-soda for Mr. MacClintock and myself. Have one, Hoyt? You, Paterson?"

Cruel, thin, casual talk clicking against the teeth in nervous haste; the commercial talk of men bartering their lives against each tick of the clock; men caught like rats in a trap, with no escape but death or a lucky chance like Mallory's. Caught and yet denying the trap—laughing at it until the low roof of the mess shack rumbled with the echo; drowning it in a whisky for the night.

Afterward, Hoyt came down the passage with him to his room—Hoyt, with his face cleaned of the afternoon's oil and his eyes slightly bright with the wine he had taken.

"We're relieved to-morrow on account of casualties," he said. "I'll tick you out early and we'll go joy riding—see what we can teach each other." He smiled. "'Night."

Paterson undressed slowly and threw back the flap of his sleeping bag. He ran his fingers softly down the muscles of his left arm. Automatically they stopped at the spot Mallory had been hit. He stretched his thumb from the arm to his heart—seven inches. He shrugged. Nice to go that way. Clean and quick. He sat upon the edge of his cot and pulled on his pajama trousers. Oh, well, this was the place—the last place he had to go to. This was the cot he would sleep his last sleep in. If it weren't a lonely job! That chap in the mess who wouldn't be a two-seater pilot for anything. If he could only feel like that. If he could only feel Hoyt's complacency. Hoyt, with his calm smile and the two little ribbons under his wings. Military Cross and the Legion of Honour, and three months before he had been green—pukka green!

Paterson blew out the light and turned in. Hoyt was a good fellow—damned decent. Outside he could hear Phelps-Barrington's voice muffled by the snow: "Come on, snap into it! Tender for Amiens! Who's coming?" The yell died in the roar from the car's engine.

Paterson lay for a moment thinking; then suddenly he reached for his pocket flash, snapped it, and stared nervously at the empty cot across the room. There was no bedding on it, nor any kit tucked under it; only the chair beside it, and the cracked mirror.

He got up and padded over in his bare feet. Stencilled on one corner of the canvas there was a name—J. G. H. Lyons. There had been no Lyons introduced to him in the mess. Perhaps he was on leave. Perhaps he had flu with Trent and was down at the base. The spot of fear in his heart trembled slightly and he knew suddenly where J. G. H. Lyons was. He was dead! Somewhere out in the snow, miles across the line, J. G. H. Lyons slept in a shattered cockpit.

The door behind him opened softly. It was Hoyt, in pajamas. "Got a cigarette?" he asked casually.

Paterson turned sharply and grinned. "Righto," he said. "There on the table."

Hoyt took one and lighted it. "Can't sleep," he said. "Come in and take Mallory's cot if you want to. I've some new magazines and I can tell you something about our work here until we feel sleepy."

Hoyt was a good fellow—damned decent.

The cold wet mist lay upon the fields like a soft veil drawn across the face of an old woman who had died in the night. Mechanics, with their balaklavas pulled down across their ears, were running about briskly to keep warm—kicking chocks in front of under-carriage wheels, snapping propellers down with mighty leaps and sweeps until the cold engines barked into life and settled to deep concert roaring. Dust and pebbles, scattered by the backwash, swept into the billowing hangars in a

thin choking cloud that pattered against the canvas walls. Hoyt's machine trembled and crept out of the line, with Phelps-Barrington after it. Trent, who had come back from the base the day before, taxied out next.

Paterson waved to the mechanics to pull out his own chocks. They yanked mightily on the ropes, and he blipped his motor with his thumb. Behind him and to the left came Yardley, the new man who had come up from Pool to fill Mallory's place. Then MacClintock, sitting high in his cockpit, rushed out with a roar and a swish of gravel. MacClintock was deputy leader.

Hoyt waved his hand in a quick nervous sweep, and the flight started. Through the mist they roared with their engines howling into sharp echo against the hut walls. A moment later tails whipped up and wheels bounced lightly upon the uneven ground. Then Hoyt's nose rose sharply and he zoomed into the air in a broad climbing turn, with the five others after him in tight formation.

Paterson glanced at his altimeter—five hundred feet. He looked ahead and to the left. There was Bapaume in its raggedness, half drowned in the mist. Suddenly Phelps-Barrington's machine burst into rose flame and every strut and wire trembled like molten silver—the sun. He could see the red rim just peeping up ahead of him and he was warmer for the sight of it. Below, under the rim of his cockpit, the ground was still wrapped in its gray shroud.

They were climbing up in close formation. The altimeter gave them four thousand feet now. He glanced to the left. Yardley waved. Yardley was going through the agony of his first patrol over the line—the same agony he had gone through himself the week before. Only Yardley seemed different, somehow—surer of himself—less imaginative. He was older, too. Behind them, MacClintock, the watch-dog, was closing in on their tails and climbing above them to be ready to help if the Hun swooped from behind unexpectedly.

There were clouds above—gray blanket clouds that came together in a solid roof, with only a torn hole here and there

to show the blue. Bad clouds to be under. Hoyt knew it and kept on climbing. Almost ten thousand feet now. The ground below had cleared slowly and thrown off most of its sullen shroud. Here and there, in depressions, the mist still hung in arabesque ruffles like icing in a confectioner's window or the white smoke of a railway engine.

The line was under them now, running south and east like a jagged dagger cut, in and out, in and out across the land, not stopping for towns, but cleaving straight through their grey smudgy ruins with a cold disregard and a ruthless purpose. The first day he had seen it, it had seemed a dam to him; a break-water built there to hold something that must not flow past it; a tourniquet of barbed wire twisted and held by half the world that the blood of the other half might not flow. Some day something would break and the whole thing would give way for good or evil. Curiously, now, like Hoyt, he didn't care which. And suddenly he knew how his older brother had felt, on that last leave, and he had called him unsporting in the pride of his youthful heart!

Hoyt was still climbing. Thin wraiths of cloud vapour groped awkwardly for the six tiny Camels, like ghost fingers, trying desperately to stop them and hold them from their work. Paterson glanced again at Yardley. He had been glad when Yardley came. He was still green himself, but Yardley was greener. It helped buck him up to think about it.

The line was behind them now. Hoyt turned south to pass below the anti-aircraft batteries of Cambrai, and presently they crossed the tarnished silver ribbon of the Somme-Scheldt Canal. Mechanically, Paterson reached for his Bowden trigger and pressed it for a burst of ten shots to warm the oil in his Vickers gun against the bite of the cold air. Then he clamped the joy stick between his knees and reached up for the Lewis gun on his top plane.

His throat closed abruptly, with a ghastly dryness, and his knees melted beneath him. The wing fabric beside his gun was ruffling into torn lace and he could see the wood of the camber

ribs splintering as he watched! For a moment he was paralyzed, then frantically he whipped around in his seat and swept the air above him. Nothing. There was the torn fabric and the staring rib and nothing else. MacClintock was gone. Yardley was still there, lagging, with the smoke coming in puffs and streaks from his engine. Then Hoyt turned in a wild climb to the left. Phelps-Barrington dipped his nose suddenly and dived with his engine full on, and at once, where there had been only six Camels, the sky was full of gray machines with blunt noses and black crosses.

Blindly he pressed his Bowden trigger and fired into the empty air, blindly he dived after Phelps-Barrington. Somewhere to the left he saw a plume of black smoke with something yellow twisting in the sunlight on its lower end. A blunt nose crossed his propeller—into his stream of bullets. He screamed and banked wildly, still firing. He saw Hoyt above him. He forgot the machine in front and reached for his Lewis to help Hoyt. He tried to wait—something about the outer ring of the rear sight—but his fingers got the better of him and he fired point-blank.

As quickly as it had begun it ended. There was Hoyt circling back, and two other Camels to the left and below him—four of them. They closed in on Hoyt and he wondered where the two others were. He looked for them—probably chasing after the Huns. He could see dots to the southward—too far away to make out the markings. Hoyt had signalled the washout and they were headed back across the line. Funny those two others didn't come. He wondered who they were. Probably Phelps-Barrington and MacClintock, hanging on to the fight until the last. They worked together that way. He had heard them talk in the mess about it. They'd be at it again to-night, and to-night he could join them for the first time. He'd been in a dog fight! Shot and been shot at! The spot of fear shrank to a pin point.

The brown smudge of the airdrome slid over the horizon. He blipped his motor and glided in carefully. No use straining

that top wing—no telling what other parts had been hit. No use taking chances.

Hoyt was standing beside his machine with his glove off, staring at his finger nails. Phelps-Barrington was climbing out. Paterson taxied in between them. The man in the fourth machine just sat and stared over the rim of his cockpit. Phelps-Barrington walked slowly across to Hoyt and laid a hand on his shoulder. Hoyt shrugged and stuffed his bare hand into his coat pocket. Paterson sat with his goggles still on and his throat quite dry. The man in the fourth machine vaulted out suddenly, ripped off his helmet and goggles and hurled them to the ground. It was Trent.

He climbed out of his own machine and walked over toward Hoyt. Phelps-Barrington, who had a wild word for all occasions—Phelps-Barrington, who led the night trips to Amiens—was silent. When Paterson came up he shrugged and scowled ferociously.

"Is it you, Pat?" said Hoyt. "Thought it was Yardley."

"'Struth!" said Phelps-Barrington. "Let's go and have a drink."

Paterson thrilled as the man slipped an arm through his. For one awful moment he had thought ——

"Well," Hoyt said, "those things will happen." And he shrugged again.

"I saw dots to the southward," said Paterson. "Maybe they'll be in later."

"No, little Rollo," said Phelps-Barrington. "They won't be in later or ever. I saw it with my own eyes—both in flames. I thought it was you, and until Trent landed, I thought he might be Mac. But I was wrong. Let's shut up and have a drink!"

Then suddenly he knew, and his mind froze with the ghastliness of the thought. If he'd been quicker—if he'd turned and climbed above Yardley when he saw him lagging, with the smoke squirting from his hit motor—he could have saved him. If he had kept his eyes open behind, instead of dreaming, he might have saved MacClintock, too. In a daze, he stumbled

after Phelps-Barrington. That's why Trent had hurled his helmet to the ground and walked off. That's why Hoyt had shrugged and said, "Those things will happen." It was his fault—his—Paterson's. He'd bolted and lost his head and fired blindly into the empty air. He hadn't stuck to his man. He had let Yardley drop back alone to be murdered.

"Look here, P-B," he muttered, "I'm not drinking." He wanted to be alone—to think. So quick it had all been.

Phelps-Barrington grabbed his arm and pushed him stumbling into the mess shack. Trent was slumped down at the table with his glass before him, thumbing over a newspaper. He raised his head as they came in. "Two more of the same, steward—double."

They sat down beside him and Phelps-Barrington reached for a section of the paper.

"It says here," said Trent, "that Eva Fay didn't commit suicide. Died of an overdose of hashish she took at a party in Maida Vale the night before."

The steward brought the glasses. Trent raised his and looked at Paterson. "Good work, son."

Paterson stared at him in amazement. Trent sipped his whisky and went on reading as if he had never stopped. Some time later, Paterson left them and went down to the flight office to find Hoyt. The thought of the morning still bothered him, in spite of Trent's words, and he wanted to clear it up. Hoyt smiled as he came in. "Washed the taste out in Falernian?" he asked.

"Some. Look here, skipper—this morning—what about it?"

"What about it?"

"My part—I was fast asleep. I saw Yardley lagging, and I had a moment to cross above him, but I lost my head, I'm afraid, and went wild."

The smile faded and Hoyt laid down his pencil. "Do you really think you could have saved him?"

"He was behind me already when I saw him lagging, just as you climbed and P-B dived."

"Then you couldn't have helped him, because Mac was done for when I saw him and climbed, and half a tick after I climbed, P-B saw Yardley burst into flames. There you are."

"But if I'd kept my eyes back, instead of trusting to Mac?"

"Look here," said Hoyt, "no man can keep his eyes on everything. Something always happens in the place he isn't looking. Bear that in mind and forget this morning. You've seen a dog fight from the inside and lived. Take it easy. You're not here to do everything. You're here to stick to us. You might have run away. Remember that and be afraid of it. Remember if you get away by leaving a pal—he may live to come back. Then you'll have to face him, and engine trouble is a poor excuse.

"Trouble with you youngsters is that you've been fed up on poobah. And the myth of the fearless air fighter. Put it out of your mind. There's no such thing. Some are less afraid than others. Some are drunker—take your choice. Class dismissed." Hoyt grinned. "Go get cleaned up. We'll jog into Amiens for tiffin. Tender in half an hour. Tell Trent and P-B."

They spent most of the afternoon at Charlie's Bar with some of the men from the artillery observation squadron. For dinner they went to the Du Rhin and the glasses flowed red. Afterward, in another place, there was a fight, as usual, and chairs crashed like match sticks, until whistles sounded outside and the A.P.M.'s car, siren screaming, raced up the street. They poured out into the alleyway and ran, leaving the waiter praying in high, shrieking French:

Trent had a bottle with him. They rode all the way home singing and shouting to high heaven, forgetting that there were two empty chairs in the mess and that there might be more to-morrow.

"Take the cylinders out of my kidneys,
Take the scutcheon pins out of my brain,
Take the cam box from under my backbone
And assemble the engine again!"

They were good fellows—Billy Hoyt, P-B, Pat, and Ray Trent. Have 'nother li'l' drink.

They roared along like a Juggernaut, with the exhaust splitting the night air. Sometimes they were on the road and sometimes they were off. No one cared so long as they kept hurtling into the darkness.

Phelps-Barrington was fast asleep. Pat woke him up at the airdrome and tumbled him into the hut.

They stumbled over a kit bag in the doorway. P-B straightened up suddenly. "Good-bye, Mac, old lad, sleep tight."

Trent kicked the bag out of the way. "Damned adjutant! Take P-B in with you, Pat. I'm bunking with the skipper. Might have the decency to take Mac's kit over to squadron office and not leave it lying around the passage. 'Night."

Paterson was quite sober. He tumbled P-B into bed and stood for a moment at the open window, staring out across the ground mist that billowed knee high in the faint night breeze. He rested his elbows on the sill and hid his face in his trembling hands. If he could only be like the others—casual—calloused. If he had less imagination—more sand—stamina—something. MacClintock had planned this night himself, at breakfast. Yardley had left a letter addressed and stamped on his window sill.

Paterson's mind jumped miles to the eastward. He saw the two blackened engines lying somewhere in the bleak fields beyond, ploughing into the ground, with their mats of twisted wires coiled around them in a hideous trap.

Their families would get word to-morrow. "Missing," it would read. And then later: "Previously reported missing, now reported killed in action." And to-morrow—perhaps his own family. Why can't it be quick?

There was a noise behind him. Someone fumbling at the door latch—Hoyt. "Had this bit left. Bottoms up! Quick!" He took the glass and drained it. The liquor bit into his veins and burned him. Hoyt set his own glass down on the wash-

stand with a sharp click. "Get into bed now, you idiot. Good-night."

Spiked drink. Hoyt was a good fellow—damned decent. Do anything for Hoyt. Never let Hoyt go. Like my brother—before the war. Good old Hoyt. And he sank suddenly into a dreamless fuddle of sleep.

The weeks crawled on slowly. Paterson felt like a man climbing a steep ladder. Each day was a rung behind him. Each new rung showed an infinite number still ahead, waiting for him to go on, luring him with their apparent safety, waiting for him to reach the one rotten rung that would do him in. Some day he would reach it, and it would crack under him, or his fingers would slip and hurtle him into the abyss under his charred engine.

Offensive patrols and escort for the artillery observation squadron filled their time, with sometimes a road strafe to vary the monotony. These he liked best, for some quaint reason—perhaps because there was less space to fall through. Sometimes there would be a battalion on those roads—a battalion to scatter and knock down like tin soldiers on a nursery floor. Quite impersonal. They were never men to Paterson. Like dolls they ran and like dolls they sprawled awkwardly where they fell.

P-B and Trent and Hoyt carried him through somehow. Mallory was back again, but Mallory never counted much with him. P-B and Trent and Hoyt were a bulwark. They meant safety. It was good to wake up at night and hear P-B snoring on the other cot, to know that Hoyt and Trent were asleep in the next cubicle. It was good to see them stamping to keep warm before the patrol took off in the half light of early morning. So different from one another and yet so alike underneath. Hoyt was nearer his kind than the two others. Tall and spindly like his brother, with a straight, thin nose that quivered slightly at the nostril when he was annoyed. Hoyt, who smiled and sanctioned the childish depravity of little P-B,

but never quite met it with his own, although always seeming to, on the night trips to Amiens. Trent, glowering and quiet, with a keen hatred for everything political that he learned in the offices of the London and South Western before the war, when the army to him had meant young wastrels swanking the Guards' livery in the boxes of theatres—wastrels who had died on the Charleroi Road three years before.

Suddenly, from one of his mother's letters, he found that he had been in France almost three months. He stiffened with the thought and remembered what Hoyt had told him that day he had come: "I've been here three months. When I came, I came just as you did to-day—pucka green." He knew then that all his hopes were false. He was the same to-day as he had been that first day. He would always be the same. The spot of fear would always be with him. Some day it would swell and choke him and his hands would function without his frozen brain. He should never have tried to fly. He should have gone into the infantry as his brother had. Too much imagination—too little something. In three months he had learned the ropes, that was all; how to fire and when to fire, where the Archie batteries were near Cambrai, how to ride a cloud and crawl into it—nothing more.

The weeks went on, creeping closer and closer to the twenty-first of March—the twenty-first of March—and with them the feeling crept into Paterson's heart—a feeling that something frightful was to happen. Things had been quiet so long and casualties had been few. C Flight hadn't been touched in weeks. He brooded over the thought and slept badly. He went to Amiens with P-B more frequently. If it was to be any of the three, he knew he wouldn't be able to stand it. His bulwark would crumble and break and he would break with it. On the dawn patrols, those few minutes before they climbed into the cockpits and took off were agony: "This will be the day. It must be to-day. We can't go on this way. Our luck will break."

One day when they were escorting 119, four dots dived on them from behind and he knew suddenly what he would do.

Stark, logically, the thing stood before him and beckoned through the wires of his centre section. If a shot hit his plane, he would go down. They were far over the lines, taking 110 on a bombing show. He would wobble down slowly, pushing his joy stick from side to side in a slow ellipse as if he were out of control. Then he would land and run his nose into the ground and be taken prisoner. The others would see him and swear that he'd been hit—and he wouldn't do it until his machine had been hit. That for his own conscience's sake and for the years he would have to live afterwards.

But A Flight, behind and far above, saw the dots and scattered them, and the chance was gone.

Then day by day he waited for another. He knew now that he would do it at the first opportunity. He slept better with the thought, and the minutes seemed shorter now while he waited at dawn for his bus to be run out. All the details were worked out in his mind. If any one of the three were close to him, he'd throw up his hands wildly before he started down. They'd see that and report it. Then when he landed he'd pull out the flare quick and burn his machine so that they would think he had crashed and caught fire. It was so easy!

He spent less time with P-B now. Somehow the old freedom was gone. Somehow Hoyt wasn't the same to him either. He was working with three strangers he had never really known—three casual strangers he would leave shortly and never see again.

On the morning of the fourteenth of March the caller turned C Flight out suddenly, without warning, about an hour after P-B and Trent had returned from Amiens. A special signal had come in from wing headquarters. B Flight had the regular morning patrol, but there was to be an additional offensive patrol besides. A Flight had morning escort and the dusk patrol. That meant C for the special. Paterson could hear Hoyt swearing about it next door. P-B, across the room, uttered a mighty curse and rolled over. Paterson got him a

bucket of cold water and doused his feverish head in it. Trent and Hoyt were still cursing pettishly in the next cubicle.

Sleep-stupid, the four of them stumbled into the mess for hard-boiled eggs and coffee. Mallory and the new man, Crowe, were already eating, white-faced and unshaven. They slumped down beside them in silence.

In silence, they trooped across the dark airdrome, buttoning their coats and fastening helmet straps against the cold wretchedness of the March wind. The machines were waiting for them in a ghostly line like staring wasps that had eaten the food of the gods and grown to gigantic size.

They climbed in and taxied out mechanically. B Flight had already left on the regular dawn patrol. They blipped their motors and roared away, leaving their echo and the sharp smell of castor oil behind on the empty 'drome.

Hoyt led them south to the crumpled ruins of Péronne and out to the line, climbing high to get the warmth of the sunlight that began to tint the clouds above them. They were going over to Le Cateau and beyond. Intelligence wanted pictures to confirm certain reports of new Hun shell dumps and battery concentration. The photographic planes were to go out and get them under escort as soon as there was enough light. As additional precaution, offensive patrols were to be kept up far over the enemy's lines to insure the success of the pictures. They passed the sullen black stain that was Le Câtelet and turned to the eastward. The ground was already light and the camera busses would be starting.

Hoyt took the roof at eighteen thousand feet and skirted the cloud wisps, watching below for customers. Paterson watched P-B anxiously. He had been roaring drunk an hour before. Groggy and drunk still, probably. He closed in a trifle and climbed above him, but P-B waved him down and wiggled his fingers from the end of his nose.

He looked ahead and down at Trent. Trent had been drunk, too, but he was steady now, sawing wood above and slightly behind Hoyt.

Then, suddenly, beyond Trent and far below, he saw a Hun two-seater alone. The old stunt. Hoyt shifted and pulled up his nose to climb above it and wait. Trent followed him up. Somewhere above that two-seater, and a half mile behind, there would be a flight of Hun scouts skulking under the clouds, waiting to pounce on whoever dived for the two-seater. Hoyt knew it for a decoy. Paterson knew it. They would climb above the cloud edge, circle back, and catch the Hun scouts as they passed underneath.

Paterson trembled slightly. This was his chance at last. There'd be a long dive and a sure fight from behind, and in the mix-up he'd wobble down and out of the war via Lazaret VI in Cologne. He glanced around to see if Mallory was above him, and suddenly, out of the corner of his eye, he saw P-B shove his nose full down and throw himself into a straight dive for the decoy bus.

He gazed and shouted "No!" into the roar of his engine. P-B, in a nasty temper and half fuddled, didn't smell the trick. There was one awful second, while Crowe closed up into P-B's place and Hoyt banked to wait above, for the Hun scouts to pounce down on the Camel.

P-B fired, pulled up and dived again, far below them. The Hun two-seater banked sharply and came up and over in an Immelmann turn to get away. P-B caught it halfway over and a trickle of smoke swept out from its engine. Then in an instant Hoyt dived, with the rest of C Flight after him.

The next thing Paterson knew there were two Huns on his tail and a stream of tracer bullets pecking at his left wing. He pulled back on his stick and zoomed headlong up under Mallory. So close he was for a second that he could see the wheels turning slowly on Mallory's undercarriage and almost count the spokes glinting in the sunlight where the inside canvas sheathing had been taken off.

Mallory pulled away from him in a quick climbing turn and the Huns passed underneath, banking right and left. Paterson picked the left-hand one, thundered down on him in a short

dive, and let go a burst of ten shots into the pilot's back. He saw the pilot's head snap sideways and his gloved hands fly up from the controls. Then Mallory dived over him after the other one. He turned in a wild split-air and followed Mallory.

There were more Huns below him and to the left, with two of the C Flight Camels diving and bucking between them. He raced furiously into a long dive, picked the nearest, and opened fire again in short, hammering bursts. His Hun wobbled and started down awkwardly in long sweeps. He picked another, still farther below, and pushed his stick forward until the rush of air gagged him. Wildly he fired as he ploughed down on it, and the chatter of his guns stabbed through the roar of his engine. He yelled like a madman, shot under the Hun, pulled up sharply, and fired into its gray mud-streaked belly. There was a fan of scarlet flame and a shock that tossed him to one side. He stalled and whipped out into a spin. Far below him he could see the decoy two-seater trailing a long plume of reddish smoke and flopping, wings over, toward the floor.

Then, suddenly, he saw his chance to wobble down and get away. He ruddered out of the spin and ran his stick once through the slow eclipse he had planned. But somehow he had to force himself to do it. There wasn't the relief he had expected. He looked back. Three C-Flight machines were still above him, fighting madly—P-B, Trent, and Hoyt. No—not this time. He pulled his stick back and climbed up. There were five Huns circling the Camels. It was a long shot, but he fired at the nearest and came up under the tail just as one of the Camels hurtled into a nose dive, twisted over, and snapped off both wings. He saw the pilot's arms raised wildly in the cockpit and no more.

Blood streamed into his mouth. He had torn his lips with his teeth in the excitement. The warm salty tang mounted to his brain. His goggles were sweat-fogged. His fingers ached with their pressure on the joy stick, and his arm was numb to the elbow. In a spasm of blind hatred, he fired. Tracers raced

across his top plane and struck with little smoke puffs at the Hun above him and fanged home.

He threw himself up and over in an Immelmann turn and came under the next, still firing. He let go his stick and jerked his Lewis gun down its sliding mount on his top plane. It fired twice and jammed. He yanked madly at the cocking lug, but it stuck halfway. He hurtled down again in another spin. The ground swept around in a quick arc that ended in clouds and more Hun busses. He caught at his thrashing joy stick. Again the ground flashed through his centre section struts in a brown smudge, with the blaze of sun hanging to one end of it. Then there was a Camel above him and a Camel below him. He closed in on the one below and squinted at the markings. Hoyt. He looked up at the other Camel, but the numerals on the side of its fuselage were hidden with a torn flap of fabric. Together, the three turned westward and started back.

Presently, near the line, the bus above him wobbled and dipped its nose. He stared at it. It went into a long, even glide that grew slowly steeper as he watched. He looked down for Huns. There were none. The glide became a dive, the dive twisted into an aimless spin, like the flopping of a lazy swimmer turning over in shallow water. The spin flattened and the Camel whipped out upside down, stalled, snapped out again, and again spun downward in that ghastly slow way. Over and over, only to whip out, stall and spin again. It was miles below him now. Nothing to do. Fascinated, he watched it as he followed Hoyt's tail. It was a mere dot now, flashing once or twice in the sun as it flopped over and over. Close to the ground now—closer. Then, suddenly, a tiny sheet of pink flame leaped up like the flash of a far beacon. That was all.

Hoyt was side-slipping below him, and he saw his own air-drome under the leading edge of his bottom wing. He followed Hoyt down. They landed together and taxied slowly in toward the hangars. They stopped side by side and climbed out stiff-legged. Paterson looked down and saw that his right flying boot was torn and flayed into shreds across the outer side.

There was a jagged fringe on the skirt of his coat where the leather had been ripped into ruffles. Dumbly, he looked back into his cockpit. The floor boards were splintered and the wicker arm of his seat was eaten away. He shrugged and walked over toward Hoyt. There was blood on the rabbit fur of Hoyt's goggles, blood that oozed slowly down and dripped from his chin piece in bright drops.

"Cigarette?"

Paterson gave him one. They walked into the flight office and slumped into chairs. Hoyt ripped off his helmet and dabbed at the scratch on his cheek. "I'm glad you got out, Pat," he said absently.

Then the fear spot broke and splattered into the four corners of Paterson's soul. He sprang up trembling, with his fists beating the air.

"The dirty lice!" he screamed. "They've killed P-B! They've killed Trent! D'y' hear me, Hoyt?—they've killed 'em! They're gone! They'll never come back! They've ——"

Hoyt's voice came evenly, calmly, through his screaming. "Steady, boy! Steady! You can't help it. No one can. Steady, now!"

A mat of white oil-splotched faces stared at them from the open doorway, that led into the hangar. The boy turned wildly. "Clear out!" he shrieked. They vanished, open-mouthed. Hoyt drew him down into a chair. "No, Hoyt, no! Can't you see? P-B and you and Trent have meant everything to me. I can't go on. I've fought this thing till I'm crazy." Hoyt reached quickly and slammed the door. "I've fought it night and day!" He threw up his arms hopelessly and covered his face with his shaking hands.

Hoyt put his hand on his trembling shoulders and patted them. "Steady, now! Steady! None of that!" he said awkwardly.

Paterson's head whipped down across his sprawled arms on the desk top and the sobs tore at his throat in great gusts that

choked him. "Oh, God!" he sobbed. "What's it all about, Hoyt? What's the use of it?"

"Steady, son! I don't know. Nobody knows. It just happened, as everything happens. It's much too late to talk causes. We're here and we know what we have to do. That's enough for us. It's all we have anyway, so it must be enough." He took his blood-soaked cigarette from his mouth and hurled it into a corner. It landed with a soft spat.

Someone knocked at the door. "Come in." It was the runner from squadron office. He saluted. "Yes?" said Hoyt.

The man glanced at Paterson's face and snapped his eyes quickly back to the captain's.

"Beg pardon, sir," he said. "Squadron's just been signalled through wing. One of the C Flight machines came down near B Battery, the 212th."

"Who was it?" asked Hoyt.

"Lieutenant Mallard, they reported it, sir. That'll be Lieutenant Mallory, sir, won't it?"

"Yes." Hoyt's voice was quite flat. "Thank you."

The man saluted again and shut the door. Hoyt dabbed at his cheek and reached into his desk drawer for another cigarette. Paterson stood up suddenly and grabbed his arm. "Listen, skipper!" Hoyt's eyes met his calmly. "I'm going to tell you something. I'll feel better if I do. I've been a weak sister in this flight. I've planned for days to go down and let myself be taken prisoner—to get out of it all. I've been sick of it—sick of it, d'y' hear, until I couldn't think straight. I wanted to get out alive. I wanted to get away in any way I could. This morning I broke. I let go and started down ——"

Hoyt smiled. "Your trouble, Pat, is that you think you're the only person in this jolly old war."

Paterson stared at him. "But I did! I started down, out of it, this morning!"

"How'd you get here?" asked Hoyt.

"But if I hadn't broken for that moment this morning ——"

"That's a lie!" snapped Hoyt. "You're talking poobah! I

know how those things happen. If P-B hadn't gone down after the two-seater they'd all be here now; and by the same reasoning, if my aunt wore trousers she'd be my uncle. The important thing is that it's you and me now and nothing else matters. We'll have four brand-new men to whip into shape to-morrow, and whatever you think of yourself you've got to do it. I can't do much, for I'll be ahead, leading. You'll be behind them and you'll have to do it all. They'll be frightened and nervous and green, but the job's to be done. Understand? You've got to goad them on and get them out of trouble and watch them every minute, so that in time they'll be as good as P-B and Trent—so that when their turn comes they can do for other green men what P-B and Trent did for you. Do you see now what this morning has done for you?" He paused for a moment, and then, in a lower tone—"Afraid? Who isn't afraid? But it doesn't do any good to brood over it."

C Flight did no duty the next day, nor the day following. Hoyt went up to the 212th and identified Mallory for burial, while Paterson flew back to the Pool for the replacement pilots and a new Camel for Hoyt.

In Amiens he heard the first whispered rumours of what was going to happen. Intelligence was ranting for information. Everybody had the story and nobody was right. The hospitals were evacuating as fast as possible. Fresh battalions were being hustled up. It wasn't a push. Anyone could tell that with half an eye. Something the Hun was doing. The spring offensive a month earlier this year. G.H.Q. was plugging the gaps frantically, replacing and reinforcing and wondering where the hammer would fall and what it would carry with it. Hence the pictures that had cost the lives of P-B and Trent. The air itself trembled with uncertainty, and rumours flew fast and thick.

Paterson flew back with the four new pilots and brought the rumours with him. Hoyt had more to barter in exchange. The talk ran riot at dinner.

"It's a Hun push, all right, but where, nobody knows. We'll

have word in a day or so, but it'll be wrong whatever it is, mark what I say!"

And then on the evening of the twentieth things started. A signal came for the major just as they sat down to mess. He went out and presently called out the three flight commanders. When they came back, they took their places thoughtfully. Silence trembled in the room like the hush that precedes the first blasting stroke of a great bell in a cathedral tower. The major swept his eyes down the board.

"You will remain at the airdrome to-night, gentlemen, and remain sober. Officers' luggage is to be packed and packed on lorries which Mr. Harbord is providing for that purpose." He paused for a moment. "This is a precautionary move, gentlemen. We are to be ready to retire at a moment's notice. Flight commanders have the map squares of the new airdrome. You can take that up later among yourselves." He leaned back in his chair and beckoned to the mess sergeant. "Take every officer's order, sergeant, and bring me the chit."

The talk broke in a wild flood that roared and crackled down the length of the table. The tin walls trembled with the surge of it and the echoes broke in hot discord among the rough pine rafters. Offensive patrol for all three flights, to start at five minutes to four A.M. Air domination must be maintained. Wing's instructions were to stop everything at all cost. Go out and fight and shut up. Somebody presented the adjutant with the sugar bowl and asked him if he had his umbrella for the trip back. The adjutant had spent eighteen days without soles to his boots in 1914. He and the medical officer stood drinks for the squadron.

About ten o'clock, Hoyt called the five men of C Flight into his hut. "To-morrow, something is going to happen, I'm afraid, and you've got to meet it without much experience. What I want you to understand is simply this: You've got Pat and you've got me. Follow us and do what we do. We won't let you down so far as it is humanly possible. If the flight gets split up in a dog fight, then fight your way out two and two—

and go back to the new 'drome two and two. Don't go separately. Further"—he paused—"if anything happens to me"—Paterson looked up at him quickly and something tugged sharply at his heart; Hoyt went on quietly—"take your lead from Mr. Paterson. You'll be Number 5, Darlington. You'll climb up as deputy leader. And if anything happens to Pat, then it's up to you to bring the rest home." He smiled. "There is a bottle of Dewar's in this drawer. Take a snifter now, if you want it, and one in the morning. It's for C Flight only. Oh, yes, one more thing: The fact that we're moving back to a new airdrome seems to indicate that staff thinks nothing can stop the Hun from breaking through. The fact that nothing can stop the Hun seems to indicate that, for the nonce, we are losing our part of the war. If the thought will help you—it's yours without cost."

The caller rapped sharply and threw back the door. Paterson leaped to his feet half asleep and pushed back the window curtains. The clouds were down to about four hundred feet, lowering in a gray mass over the mist on the airdrome. He went into the next cubicle and turned Hoyt out. Hoyt sat up on the cot edge and ran his hand across his forehead.

"Stop the caller," he said. "Let's see what's what before we turn everybody out." They shrugged into their flying coats and groped down the passage to the major's cubicle in the next hut block.

"Let 'em sleep," said the major. "Can't do anything in this muck. Turn out one officer in each flight to watch for the break and to warn the rest. Send Harbord to me if you see him wandering about."

They woke up the skippers of A and B Flights and told them the news. Paterson took the watch for C. He turned up his coat collar and went out. It was cold and miserable in the open, and the chill crept into his bones. The smoke from his cigarette hung low about him in the still air.

Presently to the eastward there came a low roar. He looked

at his wrist watch. The hands pointed to six minutes before four o'clock. The ground trembled slightly to the sound of the distant guns and the air stirred in faint gusts that pulled at blue wraiths of his cigarette smoke. The push had started. His muscles stiffened at the knees as he listened. The first shock of the guns was raw and sharp in the quiet air; then it settled into a lower, full-throated rumble like the heavy notes of an organ growling in an underground basilica. Now it rose again in its greater volume—rose steadily, slowly, as if it were a colossal express train hammering down the switch points at unthinkable speed. Presently it soared to its highest pitch and held the blasting monotony of its tone. The minutes ticked off, but the guns never faltered in their symphony of blood. At 4:35 one pipe of the organ to the southeastward cut out suddenly and almost immediately began again, closer than before. Again it broke, as he listened, and crept nearer still.

He walked down the line of huts, thrashing his arms and blowing on his cold hands. An impersonal thing to him, yet he shivered slightly and stared upward at the low clouds. Men out there to the eastward were in it. The suspense was over for them. And suddenly he found himself annoyed at the delay, annoyed at the fog and clouds above, that kept him on the ground. He wanted to see what was going on—to know. He turned impatiently and went into the mess. The sergeant brought him coffee, and presently Muirhead of A Flight came in with Church of B.

"It's on," Church said absently. "I suppose this fog means hell up the line."

They drank their coffee and smoked in silence. The sound of the guns crept nearer and nearer, and one by one the rest of the squadron drifted in for breakfast.

Hoyt sat down next to Paterson. "I don't like it," he said. "Something is giving way up there." He went to the window and looked out. "Clouds are higher," he said, "and the fog's lifted a bit. What do you think, major?"

They crowded out of the mess doorway and stood in an anxious knot, staring upward. It was well after six o'clock.

"All right"—the major tuned around—"get ready to stand by."

C Flight collected in a little knot in front of Hoyt's Camel, smoking and talking nervously. Paterson kept his eyes on Hoyt and stamped his feet to get the circulation up. A strange elation crept into his veins and warned him. In a moment now—in a moment. Awkward waiting here. Awkward standing around listening to Darlington curse softly and pound his hands together.

Somewhere behind him on the road, a motor bike roared through the mist, and then to the southward a shell crashed not a thousand yards from the 'drome, and the echo of it thumped off across the fields. Darlington jumped and stared at the mushroom of greasy black smoke. A moment more—a moment now. Paterson reached over and tapped Darlington's sleeve. "Keep your guns warm, old boy." Darlington nodded fiercely.

The major climbed into his cockpit and a mechanic leaped to the propeller. The engine coughed once and the propeller snapped back. The mechanic leaped at it again. It spun down and melted into a circle of pale light. Everyone was climbing in. Hoyt flicked his cigarette away sharply and put a leg up into his stirrup.

They were taxi-ing out into the open ground, with the mechanics running after them. Presently they could see the road. Paterson stared at it in amazement. It was brown and crawling with lorries and troops. Something had happened! A Flight, with the major, sang off across the ground and took the air together in a climbing turn. B Flight waited a brief second and followed. Out of the corner of his eye, Paterson could see the mess sergeant climbing up on the lorry seat beside Harbord, the equipment officer. Then Hoyt waved his hand. Mechanics yanked at the chock ropes and waved them off. They blipped their motors and raced out after Hoyt.

At five hundred feet they took the roof in the lacy fringe of the low clouds. Bad, very bad, Paterson thought. He ran his thumb across the glass face of his altimeter and his globe became wet with the beaded moisture. He could hardly see Darlington's tail. Ahead of them the clouds were a trifle higher. Hoyt led them up and turned northward. Murder to cross the line at that height, with the barrage on. Darlington was lagging a bit. Afraid of the clouds. He dived on Darlington's tail and closed him up on Number 3. Darlington glanced back at him and ducked his head.

Hoyt was circling back now in a broad sweep. Over there somewhere was Cambrai. He looked up for an instant just in time to see the underside of a huge plane sweep over him. He ducked at the sight of the black crosses, but the plane was gone before he could whip his Lewis gun into action. Almost immediately one corner of his windshield ripped away and the triplex glass blurred with a quick frosting of a thousand cracks. He cursed into the roar of his motor and kept on.

They were higher now, but the visibility was frightful—like flying in a glass ball that had been streaked with thick dripping soapsuds. Here a glimpse and a rift that closed up as soon as you looked; there a blank wall, tapering into tantalizing shreds that you couldn't quite see beyond. He fidgeted in his cockpit and turned his head from Hoyt, below him, to the gray emptiness behind. Nothing.

Presently Hoyt banked around, and following him, the compass needle on Paterson's instrument board turned through a half circle. They were going back toward the south again and climbing still higher. An even thousand feet now—just under the rising, ragged clouds. He felt a drop of rain strike his cheek where his chin piece ended. It bit his skin like a thorn and stung for seconds afterward. His goggles were fogging. He ran a finger up under them and swept the lenses.

Then, in a breath, it happened. A gray flash swept down out of the clouds in front of the formation. Hoyt zoomed to avoid it. The Hun zoomed and they came together and melted

into each other in a welter of torn, rumpled wings and flying splinters. Something black and kicking rose out and disappeared. The cords stood out in Paterson's neck and his throat closed. Somewhere his stomach leaped and kicked inside of him, trying to get out, and he saw coffee dripping from the dials of his instruments.

In a second he had thrown his stick forward and gone down into Hoyt's place. He didn't dare look—he couldn't look. He was screaming curses at the top of his voice and the screams caught in his throat in great sobs. His goggles were hopelessly fogged. He ripped them off. Behind him the four new men closed in tightly, with Darlington above them as deputy leader.

There was blood again on his lips. He pulled back his stick and climbed. There, somewhere in the clouds, were the men who had done it! All right! All right! His eyes stung and wept with the force of the wind, and his cheeks quivered under the lash of the raindrops. With his free hand, fist clenched, he pounded his knee in stunned anguish until his muscles ached. Hoyt! Hoyt! Then he saw what he wanted and dived down furiously at the shape in the mist. Bullets tore at his top plane and raked across the cowlings behind him. He closed on the Hun and sent it spinning. There was another—three—five—nothing but Huns. He dived in between them. Fine! He was screaming again, and firing. He forgot he was flying. The joy stick thrashed crazily between his knees and the ground and the clouds were a muddy gray scarf that swept from side to side across his eyes. Guns were the thing. Once, in a quick flash, he saw tiny men running upside down through the ring sight of his Lewis gun—the gun on his top plane—funny.

His wrists ached and his fingers were quite dead against the Bowden trigger. No, not that; that's a Camel—Darlington. He grabbed at his joy stick and pulled it back. Funny how hard it was to pull it. Another Camel swept in beside him, and another, with startling suddenness. It had been a long time now—a long time. Somebody had been afraid once and there had been a man named Hoyt. No, Hoyt was dead. Hoyt had been

killed days before. Must have been P-B. P-B was probably in Amiens by now. He'd left in the tender at six o'clock. And always his guns chattered above the roar of his engine.

Abruptly, the cross wires of his centre section raced up to him from a great distance and stopped just before his eyes. He wondered where they had been all this time. He stared past them into the light disk of his propeller, and again the rain lashed into his face and stung him. He caught at the kicking joy stick and held on to it with both hands—but one hand fell away from it and wouldn't come back. With an effort, he pulled back his stick to climb up under the clouds again. Must be up under the clouds. Must wait and get more Huns. Funny things, Huns. Clumsy, stupid gray things you shot at and sent down. Go home soon, rest a bit and get some more. He laughed softly to himself. Joke. Funniest thing in the world.

The centre section wires clouded up before his eyes and started to race away from him. Here! That's bad! Can't fly without centre section wires. He chuckled a bit over that. Absurd to think of flying without centre section wires! Come back here! You come back!

Just as his eyes closed, he saw a streak of roadway flicker through the struts of his left wing. There were faces on it quite close to him; faces that were white and staring; faces with arms raised above them. Funny. He whipped back his joy stick with a convulsive jerk, and then his head crashed forward and he threw up his arm to keep his teeth from being bashed out against the compass.

It was very dark—dark except for a dancing blue light far away. He moved slightly. Something cool touched his forehead.

"All right," he muttered; "that's all right now. You just follow me." Someone whispered. He opened his eyes and stared into the darkness. "No," he said, quite plainly. "I mean it! Hoyt's dead. I saw him go down."

He felt something sharp prick his arm. "You've got the new airdrome pinpointed, haven't you?" he asked.

A soft voice said, "Yes. Sh-h-h!"

"No," he said, "I can't. Darlington's alone now, and I've got to go back. They're green, but they're good boys." He moved his legs to get up. "There's a bottle of Dewar's ——"

"No," said the voice beside him.

"Oh, yes," he said quietly. "Really, this is imperative. I know I crashed."

A stealthy languor crept across his chest and flowed down toward his legs. He thought about it for a moment. "I ought to go," he said pettishly. "But I'm so tired."

"Yes," said the voice. "Go to sleep now."

"Right-o," he said. "You call a tender and wake—me—half—an—hour." He was quiet for a moment more and then he chuckled softly. "Tell 'em it's poobah," he said sharply.

"All right," said the voice. "It's poobah."

His breathing became quiet and regular and footsteps tiptoed softly down the ward away from his bed.

PART VI
"OVER THERE"

"OVER THERE"

6

GRASS

FROM

"CORNHUSKERS" BY CARL SANDBURG

*Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo.
Shovel them under and let me work ——
I am the grass; I cover all.*

*And pile them high at Gettysburg
And pile them high at Ypres and Verdun.
Shovel them under and let me work.
Two years, ten years, and passengers ask the conductor:
What place is this?
Where are we now?

I am the grass.
Let me work.*

PREPARATION

FROM

"GOLDEN PILGRIMAGE" BY BAYARD SCHINDEL

He had his seventh birthday on the fourth of September, before his father had got back to America on the *Tennessee*. His mother always came to his room at seven o'clock in the morning, at exactly the hour of his birth, and got sentimental. This morning she had cried a little, and laughed a little, and said that she thought it was hard on a poor woman to be married to one fighting man and the mother of another fighting man; and Peter had been so mollified that he had allowed her sentiment to stream unchecked. And, too, she had been tactful enough to bring up the morning paper. He had a good start on his eighth year, reading the news of the continued advance of the German armies toward Paris. He had nothing against Paris; it was, simply, that armies ought rightfully to advance. The smeared map in the paper served as guide for his pin activities on his own large and reliable—because military—map. He had torn himself from his coloured pins with reluctance. Juan was at his birthday party, and the little girl next door, and many children who played no part in Peter's life but who were invited for what his mother called social reasons. By this she meant that they were the sons and daughters of politicians and of high-ranking army officers. There was nothing to say to this besides "Huh!" He could not talk to these congenital idiots about the war in Europe.

But the clerk in the foreign book department of Brentano's was an avid student of military matters. The two of them would look over the new books and talk away concerning the uselessness of permanent fortifications as opposed to the new

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siege guns now being used by the Central Powers. They talked of the methods of attack of various armies. Peter defended the American system, and the clerk, who had served in the German army, the continental system. They wrangled and got nowhere.

Brentano's foreign department was filling up with books which were supposed to portray the German occupation of Belgium and France. The books bore fantastic titles: *The Blond Beast*, *The Hun Conqueror*, *The Brutish Black Eagle*. There was one in particular which seemed to Peter an instance of treachery to the gentleman's profession of arms. On the jacket was a picture of a woman sitting up in bed, while a German officer, with a twisted and sneering face, leaned over the foot of the bed and smiled dreadfully. Among the German officers whom Peter had seen there was no one who looked like the picture; for they were fat-faced men, or hard-faced men, and it had been a long time since one of them had smiled. He was sure that even the German naval officers would not leer at ladies who were sitting up in bed scared to death. In Manila he had seen the officers of Admiral von Spee's fleet, and they too had been hard and unsmiling. He became annoyed at this sort of thing. Gentlemen fought with each other and did not do this woman's trick of talking behind backs. His contempt for the Allies started at that moment. They could not beat the German army by fair means so they had to try to do it by foul. He said as much to his mother.

"Oh, well, both sides are doing it," she said indifferently. "It seems to be a part of war. Propaganda. Your father says they did it in the Civil War—both sides, as hard as they could. If that's all you've got to worry over ——"

Just like a woman! Women were born without a sense of fair play.

His own sense of fair play was giving him trouble. In his manoeuvres with his toy soldiers the gunless men were the Allies and were set up in exposed places and gleefully shot down with the forty-two-centimetre gun. Although worried by

his own flagrant disobedience of unspoken laws of military etiquette, Peter excused himself on the ground that the Allies could not be good soldiers, and were extremely likely to take positions of this sort. On his visits with Juan, the Allies suffered the same unfair fate. At times the castle was French and French soldiers would be slaughtered in the courtyard, their immovably leaden bodies piled up two and three deep; while German infantry would march in at the gate, their numbers but little depleted. At other times the French and English troops would attack the fort and be hurled back by the German defenders.

Peter began to suffer such pronounced twinges of conscience that he mentioned the matter to Juan. From then on they put the Allies in unfavourable positions, to be sure, but there was at least a balance between the two forces.

Another point began to insinuate itself into the crevices of his mind. Every one of his soldiers was German, the castle was a German castle on the Rhine. In no toy store were there lead soldiers wearing uniforms other than that of the Prussian Guards. It was the fault of countries who had carelessly left the manufacture of lead soldiers to Germany; but the situation was difficult, for a boy who insisted on being "natural." His mind would not permit itself to diverge from the properly technical military long enough to forget that he was fighting a battle between the German Guards and the German Guards.

And in the meantime he read the papers instead of allowing his nurse to read them to him. He had found out that she was in the habit of leaving out whole sections of the news. It was up to him to exert himself. He would read about the battle of the Marne, with which the papers were full during the week of his birthday; and, with the top-heavy gravity and knowledge of one whose age is just seven, arrange the pins in his map.

There were many times in the succeeding days when Peter was forced to push the German army—as represented by a certain colour of pin—back—and back.

* * * * *

Peter had hot arguments with his mother, who was all of a sudden showing a most poltroonlike spirit. He was ashamed of her that she was unfeignedly glad they were keeping out of it. "It's not our fight," she would say in extenuation, when there was no extenuation.

He wondered if, very soon, he would have to be ashamed of his father. He could not make out what his father's opinion might be. Since the return of the *Tennessee* Captain Longman had been more serious, appearing to see, with his eyes that now looked at the maps of the countries he had visited, the gravity of this war game. Captain Longman had been in Russia, carrying ten millions or thereabout in bullion; had been disarmed at the border, tracked by spies who might have been revolutionaries and might have been government agents; had seen Petrograd stripped of its glitter and cooking up something dark. "Oh, well," Peter heard him say to his mother, "if we aren't in it—up to the neck and still sinking—before many months, I'll be surprised." He did not say that the surprise would be pleasant; he did not say that it would be unpleasant; and this reluctance to commit himself impressed Peter as being of itself an unpleasant thing. "The old order has almost finished changing because it's almost gone."

"What order?" asked Peter. For it had the sound of the clash of knightly arms.

But his father was sombre. "The profession of arms," he said. "At least, the profession of arms as a gentleman's profession." But he did not seem to be talking to Peter. "It makes me sad, I'll acknowledge, Annie. My people have always been soldiers."

What had his father seen in Russia? To relieve his tortured feelings, Peter drew pictures of Russian soldiers being carelessly slaughtered by other soldiers in spiked helmets. He drew pictures of the dead and wounded, of bursting shells, smoke, and violent action. He tried to re-interest his father. "The Germans must lose an awful lot of good soldiers in their mass attacks," he speculated. "I asked Captain von Papen about it,

when he was down here when you were away, an' he said they won 'cause they had force of numbers. Does that mean they don't mind losing men, Pop?"

"They think other methods—such as the wave attack—are too slow," his father told him.

"It don't matter, losing a lot of men?" persisted Peter.

And again Captain Longman went off into whatever dream he had brought back from Russia. He shook his head. But of course Peter knew that it did not matter, losing men; he had found out, while playing with his soldiers, that you could always throw in more men.

* * * * *

Wounded French and British officers began to come to the United States, on the semi-diplomatic mission of lecturing at the War College and such like subtleties. They came to the little house on Eighteenth Street, as many of them had met Captain Longman at European manoeuvres. The French officers wore the new horizon blue, and in spite of this innocent hue they contrived to look hard and efficient and ready. That was it: these Europeans were ready and the United States was not ready. Peter suffered tremendously in his pride. To offset this humiliation, he blustered about the army of the United States. "Hey, Pop—those Britishers sure do wear a sloppy uniform, don't they? All baggy over their chests, and it ain't military around the neck. I like ours; don't you, Pop?" But his mother said: "I think ours looks foolish, cut tight like that and choking the breath out of them in the field, I dare say. I always did wonder how you managed in the field, honey—with your neck hooked up as if you weren't meant to see the ground."

Peter said, with dignity: "It's modelled on the German uniform. But I don't spect you know that, Muvver: you're just a woman."

"I don't see that that alters the case," she said laughingly. She never treated him as a comrade, he grumbled to himself. When he heard really serious things he heard them through the

half-opened door of his father's study. And then you could depend upon it that the nurse would catch him at it and would drag him away. The nurse accused him of eavesdropping. "You old fool!" he shouted at her. "If I was eavesdropping I wouldn't yell when you grab me, would I?"

Only when the amiable foreign officers looked in on his toy-soldier campaigns did the nurse stand aside. She stood then with her hands folded as if they never held on to his shoulders and shook him until his teeth rattled, and her eyes mild as milk and as wishy-washy.

"Oh, mon Dieu! You who are partly French fly that flag on your battlements? Those soldiers, too—they are German! Are there no soldiers among your toys that are French?"

Peter did not wish to hurt the Frenchman's feelings, for he was a nice man and not a civilian. He forbore to exploit his big gray siege gun that was like the German guns.

His present nurse was a German. But she was tall and raw-boned instead of dumpy and pink and white. She was ever present and eternally buzzing. Often she slapped him; but usually she took it out in shaking him, which, being a silent treatment, fitted in better with life in a house that was strung on four flights of stairs. Violence was to be looked for in all nurses. No one knew this better than Peter. But he was convinced that this new tyrant was prepared to go further than her predecessors.

He had a favourite Sunday morning relaxation, in which he indulged himself before the hour for rearranging the pins in his map: he would so far weaken from the high tension proper to a warrior's son as to plunge into the "funny papers." It might have been that the tension temporarily thrown off his own nerves had fallen upon the nurse; but on a certain Sunday, coming upon him spread out on a floor littered with "funny papers," she went berserk and picked him up as if he had been a part of the litter; she shook and mauled him.

"You stop that," he commanded her. "I won't be washed

before I'm through with the Katzenjammer Kids. You lemme go."

She screamed at him and again picked him from the floor, this time by the seat of his shorts. "You damned little American," she said at the top of her lungs, "do what I tell you or I'll beat from you the back."

"You damned German," he came back at her, "you take your goddamn hands off me!"

With louder shrieks she dropped him from the height of her reach, so that, bumping his nose, he fell in a spread-eagle position on the Katzenjammer Kids. He rolled over and kicked her. "Damned German!" he said again.

She clawed the "funny papers" from underneath him and tore them into small pieces; threw the pieces on the floor and danced on top of them with her large feet; swooped up what was left and threw the mess out the window. "There, you little devil! *Verdammt* Englander! Will you come now to be washed or shall I again do it?"

"Do it if you dare!" he shouted, red in the face and breathing hard—like a dragon with breath of fire. "That is an 'atrocit'y.' But I'm not a Belgian, an' I'll kill you!" He rushed out and hung over the banisters, howling for his father. He roared for Pio, who was an Oriental and believed in the sacred rights of childhood. "Come up here an' kill this damned German!" he bawled, taking the precaution of kicking backward so that the nurse could not approach too near.

The nurse, too, screamed.

At the top of their lungs they gave their different explanations to Peter's mother, who had run upstairs and was out of breath. Peter watched his mother: was her emotion one of indignation or of a cowardly veering to the nurse's side? But Mrs. Longman got her breathing regulated; her mouth compressed, and her whole face drew down. Her voice, usually soft and rather drawling, sounded with a metallic timbre, and the words came sharply like drops of water on a tin roof.

"Didn't I tell you that I would not allow this child to be

spanked by anyone except myself?" she demanded of the nurse.

"Madame," said the nurse, "this child of yours is a young devil. God Himself could not manage him without using force. If I take care of him, I beat him: that is understood."

"Pack your things," said Mrs. Longman. "And quickly. Stop at my room, on your way out, for your wages. Make haste."

Peter was surprised at his mother. He had thought that she was an ordinary woman. And here she was, doing things in the direct fashion of a man.

Another disturbing thought played tag for precedence over his mother's strange firmness. A doubt was insinuating itself into his mind. Was the German nation so admirable as it had seemed to him? Germans could not be right and act as this nurse had acted. The English had said that the Germans were blond beasts. Hum! . . .

He played desultorily, his mind slowly turning over and showing the Allied side of the question. He took no decisive stand, however; he thought that he had better speak to someone.

He spoke to the Commandante.

The Frenchman appeared impressed. "Ah, young Pierre, you have at last seen the truth of this war!"

"This nurse," said Peter profoundly, "comes of a race of bad people."

"Oh, very bad!" sighed the Commandante. "They cut little children's hands off."

This sounded decisive. He became violently Allied and slaughtered his German Guards in heaps. The gun he used for the slaughter was the forty-two-centimetre. This bothered him. According to the best military tradition, it was not right to kill soldiers with one of their own guns. He had to think up a *détour* in his play and pretend that the gun had been captured by the Allies and turned on its former owners.

With the new nurse, promptly supplied by the agency on Farragut Square, Peter hurried down to Brentano's, a sense of

fair play leading him to the German foreign clerk. The clerk had a right to hear the Commandante's tales. The clerk took the greatest interest imaginable.

"Ach!" said the clerk. "That wicked nurse—she the sort of person is who gives our Vaterland a bad name in America. Those atrocities she would herself do. But a German soldier is different. There are some bad ones; yes. But not many bad ones there are. And there are bad ones in every army, even in your army."

He asked his father if this might be true. "Oh, yes," said his father. "Ask your grandmother what her side said about Sherman's march to the sea."

The French were a credulous people and easily excited. Perhaps it was the English who had started these tales; but he was inclined to doubt it. He had seen little English boys in China and India and they looked very much like himself. They fought as he fought and did not kick or stick something in you.

It must have been the Russians! He had never known a Russian boy; but from what his father said when he came back from Russia, they were capable of anything.

He had forgotten the Italians! Italians were not to be trusted. He had heard his father say this; he had also heard his mother say that when you bought fruit from an Italian stand you could be quite sure that the reason the apples shone like satin was because the wop vender had spat on them and polished them on the seat of his trousers. His father had said that this was no reason for judging the underlying reasons for the war; but his mother had come back with the sweeping statement that you had to judge people by the little, everyday things they did. Peter decided that the Italians had pulled this "atrocious" stunt.

His conscience again clear, he went back to his German soldiers and had them marching to victory across the nursery floor. He made an effort to bring the Commandante around to his way of thinking; and the Commandante displayed a certain treachery by getting off with Captain Longman and laughing

heartily. "This detailed explanation of his mental processes which concern these atrocities—it is amazing! It makes me to laugh at the thought of America, for it is so involved, so swayed by things of no moment. Oh, I do not mean, Captain, the thought of the army of the United States, which thinks clearly and is, I am certain, pro-ally. But these American children: it is magnificent!"

Captain Longman, too, laughed. But that was all right; he was laughing at the Frenchman, Peter was sure. He swaggered back up the stairs to his room. He had not been listening at the door—he made this quite clear to himself—he had been standing in readiness to go to the defense of his ideas if his father had not taken matters into his own hands by laughing at the Frenchman. He afterward explained this to his father.

Captain Longman said, rather wearily: "The truth is, son, that a sensible man finds something to laugh at on every side of this question." He added, as if to his own troubled mind: "A laugh out of the side of the mouth!"

This was disappointing. If his father failed him, Peter had only his recollections of Captain von Papen to hold to. Since the beginning of the war, Captain von Papen had been for the greater part of his time in New York; but Peter had run across him in the park where the statue of the womanly man Hahne-mann sat and rested his head on his hand. Captain von Papen had known how to treat a boy who was unfortunate enough to be young; he had bowed to Peter in the military fashion. A grand bow, the regulation Austro-Germanic bow. A military gesture. It would be worth while to copy this bow of Captain von Papen.

He practised before the long mirror in his mother's room. He would bend stiffly from the waist, compressing the vestiges of his baby stomach, bringing up his hand to the salute.

"Oh, w'at you t'ink you do?" said the voice of the smirking Filipino.

"*Sigge!*" ordered Peter. "*Vamoose!*"

"W'at you t'ink you do?" repeated Pio, chanting in a sing-song voice.

"I'll cut your hands off!" said Peter sternly. "Me, I practise the salute."

* * * * *

He caught the name Von Spee. Von Spee was the admiral who had defeated a British squadron at Coronel. Pausing over his oatmeal, he demanded if this was the nice man with the little beard who had been in Manila? It was exhilarating to discover that he knew a man who had walloped in a big sea fight. "What's he done now?" he asked his parents. His mental picture of Von Spee was a man in a starched naval uniform with a starched German bow, who had drunk the Kaiser's health with clicking heels and a slim body that folded up like a jackknife. And Von Spee, too—like Von Papen later on—had conducted himself toward Peter as one officer toward another; he had requested Captain Longman to bring aboard the *Scharnhorst* his little boy who was some day going to West Point. "What's he done now?" he inquired, sure that Von Spee had done only what might be expected of an admiral who invited little boys aboard the flagship.

But Admiral von Spee's days for doing delightfully courteous things were over. He had been sunk off the Falkland Islands; and his last gesture had been to pipe his crew on deck to cheer their Emperor before the ship went down. Peter had a queer feeling in his chest; he wanted to make some sort of noise, and he was afraid that the noise, when it came out of his throat, would be a howl instead of a cheer, although his mind was cheering. He kept thinking of how Von Spee's neat head and beard must have looked as he stood on the bridge—going down. He could not eat the rest of his breakfast. And then he realized that his mother looked palely sick, and then he glanced away from her to his father. "Sorter good we knew him, wasn't it, Pop?"

He braced up before going to the park to play. He must

make some supporter of the Allies suffer for having taken advantage of Von Spee.

He was crafty in his search for the sympathizer. He went up to one boy after the other, asking questions about the war. If the boy replied correctly, with the proper German sympathies, Peter would pass on to another.

Aha! Here was a fellow whose father was a British naval officer. "Do you know who I am?" demanded Peter, when he had found out who this young gentleman was.

"Naturally not," said the Englishman, looking at him with astonished blue eyes.

"I am a friend of Admiral von Spee," said Peter.

The Englishman seemed puzzled—which showed him to be a fat-head. "What about it?" he asked.

Peter grinned at him and knocked him down; for the fellow would not have understood anything softer than a blow. The Englishman got to his feet and knocked Peter down. It was a fine fight. Peter eventually got the Englishman's head under one arm and pummeled as hard as he could. Blood from the Britisher's nose ran down Peter's white sailor suit, and in Peter's heart was beatitude. He noticed that the Britisher did not kick or bite; he was a good fighter. He began to have a high opinion of the Britisher, who neither yelled nor screamed for help. He thought this one of the finest fellows he had met in Washington; and let go his head and told him so. But the Englishman could not have heard, for he hit Peter on the nose so that he fell in the sand. The defender of Albion jumped on his chest.

Peter forgot Germany and England. All that he realized, at the moment, was that here was a navy boy on top of an army boy. It would not do.

Onlookers cheered. The doughty remarks of boys who were not in the fight mingled with the shrill screams of girls who became excited. Juan and other German sympathizers arrived and jumped on all who looked as if they might be Allied in their allegiance. Battle raged around the two prostrate Anglo-

Saxons. Peter and the Englishman lay on the ground tired out, each raising a hand now and then to smite his adversary, when he could do so without being stepped on by partisans who assaulted each other overhead. Nurses called for their policeman beaux; and each nurse told the policeman who finally separated the combatants that without a doubt she took care of the worst child in Washington. This army corps of nurses held on to their charges and berated each other over rebellious heads; the war was being fought on the back stairs.

Peter had gained a great respect for this yellow-headed Britisher, who was a true fighting man. He opened negotiations for a peace. He introduced Juan. The fighting man met them halfway. He introduced himself as one John Collingwood. Peter tried out his military bow, and suggested that they refresh themselves at the drinking fountain.

"Ever been in China?" Peter asked John Collingwood.

Mr. Collingwood had been in China. However, that was not where he had learned the manly art of defense with the fists. But there was no need for him to tell Peter; anyone who knew China, as this superior boy knew it, was at the same time aware that China boys did not fight. "Were you there a couple years ago?" Peter pursued this thing of getting all their cards on the table. This fellow was a first-rate fighter, therefore England must be without guile.

John Collingwood had come back from China about a year ago.

Before they knew it, Peter and John were squatting on their heels for a sociable time. "It's much nicer there," said Peter affably. "P'leecemen don't arrest white men."

"Heah," said John Collingwood disparagingly, "everyone is white."

They understood each other.

"How can it be, in America," queried Mr. Collingwood, "that everyone is equal in all ways?"

"That don't mean officers' sons," Peter expounded.

Washington, April 6, 1917

PROCLAMATION BY THE PRESIDENT

Whereas, The Congress of the United States in the exercise of the constitutional authority vested in them have resolved by joint resolution of the Senate and the House of Representatives bearing date this day "that a state of war between the United States and the Imperial German Government which has been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared."

Whereas, It is provided by section 4067 of the Revised Statutes as follows:

Whenever there is declared a war between the United States and any foreign nation or Government, or any invasion of predatory incursion is perpetrated, attempted or threatened against the territory of the United States by any foreign nation or Government, and the President makes public proclamation of the event, all native citizens, denizens or subjects of a hostile nation or Government being male of the age of fourteen years and upward who shall be within the United States and not actually naturalized shall be liable to be apprehended, restrained, secured and removed as alien enemies.

The President is authorized in any such event by his proclamation thereof, or other public acts, to direct the conduct to be observed on the part of the United States toward the aliens who become so liable; the manner and degree of the restraint to which they shall be subject and in what cases and upon what security their residence shall be permitted and to provide for the removal of those who, not being permitted to reside within the United States, refuse or neglect to depart therefrom, and to establish any such regulations which are found necessary in the premises and for the public safety.

GOING OVER

FROM

"THREE SOLDIERS" BY JOHN DOS PASSOS

The stars were very bright when Fuselli, eyes stinging with sleep, stumbled out of the barracks. They trembled like bits of brilliant jelly in the black velvet of the sky, just as something inside him trembled with excitement.

"Anybody know where the electricity turns on?" asked the sergeant in a good-humoured voice. "Here it is." The light over the door of the barracks snapped on, revealing a rotund cheerful man with a little yellow moustache and an unlit cigarette dangling out of the corner of his mouth. Grouped about him, in overcoats and caps, the men of the company rested their packs against their knees.

"All right; line up, men."

Eyes looked curiously at Fuselli as he lined up with the rest. He had been transferred into the company the night before.

"Attenshun," shouted the sergeant. Then he wrinkled up his eyes and grinned hard at the slip of paper he had in his hand, while the men of his company watched him affectionately.

"Answer 'Here' when your name is called. Allan, B. C."

"Yo!" came a shrill voice from the end of the line.

"Anspach."

"Here."

Meanwhile outside the other barracks other companies could be heard calling the roll. Somewhere from the end of the street came a cheer.

"Well, I guess I can tell you now, fellers," said the sergeant with his air of quiet omniscience, when he had called the last name. "We're going overseas."

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Everybody cheered.

"Shut up, you don't want the Huns to hear us, do you?"

The company laughed, and there was a broad grin on the sergeant's round face.

"Seem to have a pretty decent top-kicker," whispered Fuselli to the man next to him.

"You bet yer, kid, he's a peach," said the other man in a voice full of devotion. "This is some company, I can tell you that."

"You bet it is," said the next man along. "The corporal's in the Red Sox outfield."

The lieutenant appeared suddenly in the area of light in front of the barracks. He was a pink-faced boy. His trench coat, a little too large, was very new and stuck out stiffly from his legs.

"Everything all right, sergeant? Everything all right?" he asked several times, shifting his weight from one foot to the other.

"All ready for entrainment, sir," said the sergeant heartily.

"Very good, I'll let you know the order of march in a minute."

Fuselli's ears pounded with strange excitement. These phrases, "entrainment," "order of march," had a business-like sound. He suddenly started to wonder how it would feel to be under fire. Memories of movies flickered in his mind.

"Gawd, ain't I glad to git out o' this hell-hole," he said to the man next him.

"The next one may be more of a hell-hole yet, buddy," said the sergeant, striding up and down with his important confident walk.

Everybody laughed.

"He's some sergeant, our sergeant is," said the man next to Fuselli. "He's got brains in his head, that boy has."

"All right, break ranks," said the sergeant, "but if anybody moves away from this barracks, I'll put him in K.P. till—he'll be able to peel spuds in his sleep."

The company laughed again. Fuselli noticed with displeasure that the tall man with the shrill voice whose name had been called first on the roll did not laugh but spat disgustedly out of the corner of his mouth.

"Well, there are bad eggs in every good bunch," thought Fuselli.

It gradually grew grey with dawn. Fuselli's legs were tired from standing so long. Outside all the barracks, as far as he could see up the street, men stood in ragged lines waiting.

The sun rose hot on a cloudless day. A few sparrows twittered about the tin roof of the barracks.

"Hell, we're not goin' this day."

"Why?" asked somebody savagely.

"Troops always leaves at night."

"The hell they do!"

"Here comes Sarge."

Everybody craned their necks in the direction pointed out.

The sergeant strolled up with a mysterious smile on his face.

"Put away your overcoats and get out your mess kits."

Mess kits clattered and gleamed in the slanting rays of the sun. They marched to the mess hall and back again, lined up again with packs and waited some more.

Everybody began to get tired and peevish. Fuselli wondered where his old friends of the other company were. They were good kids, too, Chris and that educated fellow, Andrews. Tough luck they couldn't have come along.

The sun rose higher. Men sneaked into the barracks one by one and lay down on the bare cots.

"What you want to bet we won't leave this camp for a week yet?" asked someone.

At noon they lined up for mess again, ate dismally and hurriedly. As Fuselli was leaving the mess hall tapping a tattoo on his kit with two dirty finger nails, the corporal spoke to him in a low voice.

"Be sure to wash yer kit, buddy. We may have pack inspection."

The corporal was a slim yellow-faced man with a wrinkled skin, though he was still young, and an arrow-shaped mouth that opened and shut like the paper mouths children make.

"All right, corporal," Fuselli answered cheerfully. He wanted to make a good inspection. "Fellers'll be sayin' 'All right, corporal,' to me soon," he thought. An idea that he repelled came into his mind. The corporal didn't look strong. He wouldn't last long overseas. And he pictured Mabe writing Corporal Dan Fuselli, O.A.R.D. 5.

At the end of the afternoon the lieutenant appeared suddenly, his face flushed, his trench coat stiffer than ever.

"All right, sergeant; line up your men," he said in a breathless voice.

All down the camp street companies were forming. One by one they marched out in columns of fours and halted with their packs on. The day was getting amber with sunset. Retreat sounded.

Fuselli's mind had suddenly become very active. The notes of the bugle and of the band playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" sifted into his consciousness through a dream of what it would be like over there. He was in a place like the Exposition ground, full of old men and women in peasant costume, like in the song, "When It's Apple Blossom Time in Normandy." Men in spiked helmets who looked like firemen kept charging through, like the Ku-Klux Klan in the movies, jumping from their horses and setting fire to buildings with strange outlandish gestures, spitting babies on their long swords. Those were the Huns. Then there were flags blowing very hard in the wind, and the sound of a band. The Yanks were coming. Everything was lost in a scene from a movie in which khaki-clad regiments marched fast, fast across the scene. The memory of the shouting that always accompanied it drowned out the picture. "The guns must make a racket, though," he added as an after-thought.

"Atten-shun!"

"Forwa-ard, march!"

The long street of the camp was full of the tramping of feet. They were off. As they passed through the gate Fuselli caught a glimpse of Chris standing with his arm about Andrews' shoulders. They both waved. Fuselli grinned and expanded his chest. They were just rookies still. He was going overseas.

The weight of the pack tugged at his shoulders and made his feet heavy as if they were charged with lead. The sweat ran down his close-clipped head under the overseas cap and streamed into his eyes and down the sides of his nose. Through the tramp of feet he heard confusedly cheering from the sidewalk. In front of him the backs of heads and the swaying packs got smaller, rank by rank up the street. Above them flags dangled from windows, flags leisurely swaying in the twilight. But the weight of the pack, as the column marched under arc lights glaring through the afterglow, inevitably forced his head to droop forward. The soles of boots and legs wrapped in puttees and the bottom strap of the pack of the man ahead of him were all he could see. The pack seemed heavy enough to push him through the asphalt pavement. And all about him was the faint jingle of equipment and the tramp of feet. Every part of him was full of sweat. He could feel vaguely the steam of sweat that rose from the ranks of struggling bodies about him. But gradually he forgot everything but the pack tugging at his shoulders, weighing down his thighs and ankles and feet and the monotonous rhythm of his feet striking the pavement and of the other feet, in front of him, behind him, beside him, crunching, crunching.

The train smelt of new uniforms on which the sweat had dried, and of the smoke of cheap cigarettes. Fuselli awoke with a start. He had been asleep with his head on Bill Grey's shoulder. It was already broad daylight. The train was jolting slowly over cross-tracks in some dismal suburb, full of long soot-smearred warehouses and endless rows of freight cars,

beyond which lay brown marshland and slate-grey stretches of water.

"God! that must be the Atlantic Ocean," cried Fuselli in excitement.

"Ain't yer never seen it before? That's the Perth River," said Bill Grey scornfully.

"No, I come from the Coast."

They stuck their heads out of the window side by side so that their cheeks touched.

"Gee, there's some skirts," said Bill Grey. The train jolted to a stop. Two untidy red-haired girls were standing beside the track waving their hands.

"Give us a kiss," cried Bill Grey.

"Sure," said the girl, "anythin' fer one of our boys."

She stood on tiptoe and Grey leaned far out of the window, just managing to reach the girl's forehead.

Fuselli felt a flush of desire all over him.

"Hol' onter my belt," he said. "I'll kiss her right."

He leaned far out, and, throwing his arms around the girl's pink gingham shoulders, lifted her off the ground and kissed her furiously on the lips.

"Lemme go, lemme go," cried the girl.

Men leaning out of the other windows of the car cheered and shouted.

Fuselli kissed her again and then dropped her.

"Ye're too rough, damn ye," said the girl angrily.

A man from one of the windows yelled, "I'll go an' tell mommer"; and everybody laughed. The train moved on. Fuselli looked about him proudly. The image of Mabe giving him the five-pound box of candy rose a moment in his mind.

"Ain't no harm in havin' a little fun. Don't mean nothin'," he said aloud.

"You just wait till we hit France. We'll hit it up some with the Madimerzels, won't we, kid?" said Bill Grey, slapping Fuselli on the knee.

"Beautiful Katy,
Ki-Ki-Katy,
You're the only only gugugu-girl that I adore;
And when the mo-moon shines
Over the cowshed,
I'll be waiting at the ki-ki-ki-kitchen door."

Everybody sang as the thumping of wheels over rails grew faster. Fuselli looked about contentedly at the company sprawling over their packs and equipment in the smoky car.

"It's great to be a soldier," he said to Bill Grey. "Ye kin do anything ye goddam please."

"This," said the corporal, as the company filed into barracks identical to those they had left two days before, "is an embarkation camp, but I'd like to know where the hell we embark at." He twisted his face into a smile, and then shouted with lugubrious intonation: "Fall in for mess!"

It was pitch dark in that part of the camp. The electric lights had a sparse reddish glow. Fuselli kept straining his eyes, expecting to see a wharf and the masts of a ship at the end of every alley. The line filed into a dim mess hall, where a thin stew was splashed into the mess kits. Behind the counter of the kitchen the non-coms, the jovial first sergeant, and the business-like sergeant who looked like a preacher, and the wrinkled-faced corporal who had been on the Red Sox outfield, could be seen eating steak. A faint odour of steak frying went through the mess hall and made the thin chilly stew utterly tasteless in comparison.

Fuselli looked enviously towards the kitchen and thought of the day when he would be a non-com too. "I got to get busy," he said to himself earnestly. Overseas, under fire, he'd have a chance to show what he was worth; and he pictured himself heroically carrying a wounded captain back to a dressing tent, pursued by fierce-whiskered men with spiked helmets like firemen's helmets.

The strumming of a guitar came strangely down the dark street of the camp.

"Some guy sure can play," said Bill Grey who, with his hands in his pockets, slouched along beside Fuselli.

They looked in the door of one of the barracks. A lot of soldiers were sitting in a ring round two tall negroes whose black faces and chests glistened like jet in the faint light. "Come on, Charley, give us another," said someone.

"Do Ah git it now, or mus' Ah hesit-ate?"

One negro began chanting while the other strummed carelessly on the guitar.

"No, give us the 'Titanic.' "

The guitar strummed in a crooning rag-time for a moment. The negro's voice broke into it suddenly, pitched high.

"Dis is de song ob de Titanic,
Sailin' on de sea."

The guitar strummed on. There had been a tension in the negro's voice that had made everyone stop talking. The soldiers looked at him curiously.

"How de Titanic ran in dat cole iceberg,
How de Titanic ran in dat cole iceberg
Sailin' on de sea."

His voice was confidential and soft, and the guitar strummed to the same sobbing rag-time. Verse after verse the voice grew louder and the strumming faster.

"De Titanic's sinkin' in de deep blue,
Sinkin' in de deep blue, deep blue,

Sinkin' in de sea.

O de women an' de chilen a-floatin' in de sea,

O de women an' de chilen a-floatin' in de sea,

Roun' dat cole iceberg,

Sung 'Nearer, my Gawd, to Thee,'

Sung 'Nearer, my Gawd, to Thee,

Nearer to Thee.' "

The guitar was strumming the hymn-tune. The negro was singing with every cord in his throat taut, almost sobbing.

A man next to Fuselli took careful aim and spat into the box of sawdust in the middle of the ring of motionless soldiers.

The guitar played the rag-time again, fast, almost mockingly. The negro sang in low confidential tones.

"O de women an' de chilen dey sank in de sea,

"O de women an' de chilen dey sank in de sea,

Roun' dat cole iceberg."

Before he had finished a bugle blew in the distance. Everybody scattered.

Fuselli and Bill Grey went silently back to their barracks.

"It must be an awful thing to drown in the sea," said Grey as he rolled himself in his blankets. "If one of those bastard U-boats ——"

"I don't give a damn," said Fuselli boisterously; but as he lay staring into the darkness, cold terror stiffened him suddenly. He thought for a moment of deserting, pretending he was sick, anything to keep from going on the transport.

"O de women an' de chilen dey sank in de sea,

Roun' dat cole iceberg."

He could feel himself going down through icy water. "It's a hell of a thing to send a guy over there to drown," he said to himself, and he thought of the hilly streets of San Francisco,

and the glow of the sunset over the harbour and ships coming in through the Golden Gate. His mind went gradually blank and he went to sleep.

The column was like some curious khaki-coloured carpet, hiding the road as far as you could see. In Fuselli's company the men were shifting their weight from one foot to the other, muttering, "What the hell a' they waiting for now?" Bill Grey, next to Fuselli in the ranks, stood bent double so as to take the weight of his pack off his shoulders. They were at a cross-roads on fairly high ground so that they could see the long sheds and barracks of the camp stretching away in every direction, in rows and rows, broken now and then by a grey drill field. In front of them the column stretched to the last bend in the road, where it disappeared on a hill among mustard-yellow suburban houses.

Fuselli was excited. He kept thinking of the night before, when he had helped the sergeant distribute emergency rations, and had carried about piles of boxes of hard bread, counting them carefully without a mistake. He felt full of desire to do things, to show what he was good for. "Gee," he said to himself, "this war's a lucky thing for me. I might have been in the R. C. Vicker Company's store for five years an' never got a raise. An' here in the army I got a chance to do almost anything."

Far ahead down the road the column was beginning to move. Voices shouting orders beat crisply on the morning air. Fuselli's heart was thumping. He felt proud of himself and of the company—the damn best company in the whole outfit. The company ahead was moving, it was their turn now.

"Forwa-ard, march!"

They were lost in the monotonous tramp of feet. Dust rose from the road, along which like a drab brown worm crawled the column.

A sickening unfamiliar smell choked their nostrils.

"What are they taking us down here for?"

"Damned if I know."

They were filing down ladders into the terrifying pit which the hold of the ship seemed to them. Every man had a blue card in his hand with a number on it. In a dim place like an empty warehouse they stopped. Their sergeant shouted out:

"I guess this is our diggins. We'll have to make the best of it." Then he disappeared.

Fuselli looked about him. He was sitting in one of the lowest of three tiers of bunks roughly built of new pine boards. Electric lights placed here and there gave a faint reddish tone to the gloom, except at the ladders, where high-power lamps made a white glare. The place was full of tramping feet and the sound of packs being thrown on bunks as endless files of soldiers poured in down every ladder. Somewhere down the alley an officer with a shrill voice was shouting to his men: "Speed it up there! speed it up there!" Fuselli sat on his bunk looking at the terrifying confusion all about, feeling bewildered and humiliated. For how many days would they be in that dark pit? He suddenly felt angry. They had no right to treat a feller like that. He was a man, not a bale of hay to be bundled about as anybody liked.

"An' if we're torpedoed a fat chance we'll have down here," he said aloud.

"They got sentries posted to keep us from goin' up on deck," said someone.

"Damn them. They treat you like you was a steer being taken over for meat."

"Well, you're not a damn sight more. Meat for the guns."

A little man lying in one of the upper bunks had spoken suddenly, contracting his sallow face into a curious spasm, as if the words had burst from him in spite of an effort to keep them in.

Everybody looked up at him angrily.

"That goddam kike Eisenstein," muttered someone.

"Say, tie that bull outside," shouted Bill Grey good-naturedly.

"Fools," muttered Eisenstein turning over and burying his face in his hands.

"Gee, I wonder what it is makes it smell so funny down here," said Fuselli.

Fuselli lay flat on deck resting his head on his crossed arms. When he looked straight up he could see a lead-coloured mast sweep back and forth across the sky full of clouds of light grey and silver and dark purplish-grey showing yellowish at the edges. When he tilted his head a little to one side he could see Bill Grey's heavy colourless face and the dark bristles of his unshaven chin and his mouth a little twisted to the left, from which a cigarette dangled unlighted. Beyond were heads and bodies huddled together into a mass of khaki overcoats and life preservers. And when the roll tipped the deck he had a view of moving green waves and of a steamer striped grey and white, and the horizon, a dark taut line, broken here and there by the tops of waves.

"O God, I feel sick," said Bill Grey, taking the cigarette out of his mouth and looking at it revengefully.

"I'd be all right if everything didn't stink so. An' that mess hall. Nearly makes a guy sick to think of it." Fuselli spoke in a whining voice, watching the top of the mast move, like a pencil scrawling on paper, back and forth across the mottled clouds.

"You belly-achin' again?" A brown moon-shaped face with thick black eyebrows and hair curling crisply about a forehead with many horizontal wrinkles rose from the deck on the other side of Fuselli.

"Get the hell out of here."

"Feel sick, sonny?" came the deep voice again, and the dark eyebrows contracted in an expression of sympathy. "Funny, I'd have my six-shooters out if I was home and you told me to get the hell out, sonny."

"Well, who wouldn't be sore when they have to go on K.P.?" said Fuselli peevishly.

"I ain't been down to mess in three days. A feller who lives on the plains like I do ought to take to the sea like a duck, but it don't seem to suit me."

"God, they're a sick lookin' bunch I have to sling the hash to," said Fuselli more cheerfully. "I don't know how they get that way. The fellers in our company ain't that way. They look like they was askeered somebody was going to hit 'em. Ever noticed that, Meadville?"

"Well, what d'ye expect of you guys who live in the city all your lives and don't know the butt from the barrel of a gun an' never straddled anything more like a horse than a broomstick. Ye're juss made to be sheep. No wonder they have to herd you round like calves." Meadville got to his feet and went unsteadily to the rail, keeping, as he threaded his way through the groups that covered the transport's after deck, a little of his cowboy's bow-legged stride.

"I know what it is that makes men's eyes blink when they go down to that putrid mess," came a nasal voice.

Fuselli turned round.

Eisenstein was sitting in the place Meadville had just left.

"You do, do you?"

"It's part of the system. You've got to turn men into beasts before ye can get 'em to act that way. Ever read Tolstoi?"

"No. Say, you want to be careful how you go talkin' around the way you do." Fuselli lowered his voice confidentially. "I heard of a feller bein' shot at Camp Merritt for talkin' around."

"I don't care. . . . I'm a desperate man," said Eisenstein.

"Don't ye feel sick? Gawd, I do. . . . Did you get rid o' any of it, Meadville?"

"Why don't they fight their ole war somewhere a man can get to on a horse? . . . Say that's my seat."

"The place was empty. . . . I sat down in it," said Eisenstein, lowering his head sullenly.

"You kin have three winks to get out o' my place," said Meadville, squaring his broad shoulders.

"You are stronger than me," said Eisenstein, moving off.

"God, it's hell not to have a gun," muttered Meadville as he settled himself on the deck again. "D'ye know, sonny, I nearly cried when I found I was going to be in this damn medical corps? I enlisted for the tanks. This is the first time in my life I haven't had a gun. I even think I had one in my cradle."

"That's funny," said Fuselli.

The sergeant appeared suddenly in the middle of the group, his face red.

"Say, fellers," he said in a low voice, "go down an' straighten out the bunks as fast as you goddam can. They're having an inspection. It's a hell of a note."

They all filed down the gang planks into the foul-smelling hold, where there was no light but the invariable reddish glow of electric bulbs. They had hardly reached their bunks when someone called, "Attention!"

Three officers stalked by, their firm important tread a little disturbed by the rolling. Their heads were stuck forward and they peered from side to side among the bunks with the cruel, searching glance of hens looking for worms.

"Fuselli," said the first sergeant, "bring up the record book to my stateroom; 213 on the lower deck."

"All right, Sarge," said Fuselli with alacrity. He admired the first sergeant and wished he could imitate his jovial, domineering manner.

It was the first time he had been in the upper part of the ship. It seemed a different world. The long corridors with red carpets, the white paint and the gilt mouldings on the partitions, the officers strolling about at their ease—it all made him think of the big liners he used to watch come in through the Golden Gate, the liners he was going to Europe on some day, when he got rich. Oh, if he could only get to be a sergeant first-class, all this comfort and magnificence would be his. He

found the number and knocked on the door. Laughter and loud talking came from inside the stateroom.

"Wait a sec!" came an unfamiliar voice.

"Sergeant Olster here?"

"Oh, it's one o' my gang," came the sergeant's voice. "Let him in. He won't peach on us."

The door opened and he saw Sergeant Olster and two other young men sitting with their feet dangling over the red varnished boards that enclosed the bunks. They were talking gaily, and had glasses in their hands.

"Paris is some town, I can tell you," one was saying. "They say the girls come up an' put their arms round you right in the main street."

"Here's the records, sergeant," said Fuselli stiffly in his best military manner.

"Oh thanks. . . . There's nothing else I want," said the sergeant, his voice more jovial than ever. "Don't fall overboard like the guy in Company C."

Fuselli laughed as he closed the door, growing serious suddenly on noticing that one of the young men wore in his shirt the gold bar of a second lieutenant.

"Gee," he said to himself. "I ought to have saluted."

He waited a moment outside the closed door of the stateroom, listening to the talk and the laughter, wishing he were one of that merry group talking about women in Paris. He began thinking. Sure he'd get private first-class as soon as they got overseas. Then in a couple of months he might be corporal. If they saw much service, he'd move along all right, once he got to be a non-com.

"Oh, I mustn't get in wrong. Oh, I mustn't get in wrong," he kept saying to himself as he went down the ladder into the hold. But he forgot everything in the sea-sickness that came on again as he breathed in the fetid air.

The deck now slanted down in front of him, now rose so that he was walking up an incline. Dirty water slushed about

from one side of the passage to the other with every lurch of the ship. When he reached the door the whistling howl of the wind through the hinges and cracks made Fuselli hesitate a long time with his hand on the knob. The moment he turned the knob the door flew open and he was in the full sweep of the wind. The deck was deserted. The wet ropes strung along it shivered dismally in the wind. Every other moment came the rattle of spray, that rose up in white fringing trees to windward and smashed against him like hail. Without closing the door he crept forward along the deck, clinging as hard as he could to the icy rope. Beyond the spray he could see huge marble green waves rise in constant succession out of the mist. The roar of the wind in his ears confused him and terrified him. It seemed ages before he reached the door of the forward house that opened on a passage that smelt of drugs and breathed out air, where men waited in a packed line, thrown one against the other by the lurching of the boat, to get into the dispensary. The roar of the wind came to them faintly, and only now and then the hollow thump of a wave against the bow.

"You sick?" a man asked Fuselli.

"Naw, I'm not sick; but Sarge sent me to get some stuff for some guys that's too sick to move."

"An awful lot o' sickness on this boat."

"Two fellers died this morning in that there room," said another man solemnly, pointing over his shoulder with a jerk of the thumb. "Ain't buried 'em yet. It's too rough."

"What'd they die of?" asked Fuselli eagerly.

"Spinal somethin' . . ."

"Menegitis," broke in a man at the end of the line.

"Say, that's awful catchin', ain't it?"

"It sure is."

"Where does it hit yer?" asked Fuselli.

"Yer neck swells up, an' then you juss go stiff all over," came the man's voice from the end of the line.

There was a silence. From the direction of the infirmary a

man with a packet of medicines in his hand began making his way towards the door.

"Many guys in there?" asked Fuselli in a low voice as the man brushed past him.

"Right smart . . ." The rest of the man's words were caught away in the shriek of the wind when he opened the door.

When the door closed again the man beside Fuselli, who was tall and broad shouldered with heavy black eyebrows, burst out, as if he were saying something he'd been trying to keep from saying for a long while:

"It won't be right if that sickness gets me; indeed it won't. . . . I've got a girl waitin' for me at home. It's two years since I ain't touched a woman all on account of her."

"Why didn't you marry her before you left?" somebody asked mockingly.

"Said she didn't want to be no war bride, that she could wait for me better if I didn't."

Several men laughed.

"It wouldn't be right if I took sick an' died of this sickness, after keepin' myself clean on account of that girl. . . . It wouldn't be right," the man muttered again to Fuselli.

Fuselli was picturing himself lying in his bunk with a swollen neck, while his arms and legs stiffened, stiffened.

A red-faced man half way up the passage started speaking:

"When I thinks to myself how much the folks need me at home, it makes me feel sort o' confident-like, I dunno why. I juss can't cash in my cheques, that's all." He laughed jovially.

No one joined in the laugh.

"Is it awfully catchin'?" asked Fuselli of the man next him.

"Most catchin' thing there is," he answered solemnly.

"The worst of it is," another man was muttering in a shrill hysterical voice, "bein' thrown over to the sharks. Gee, they ain't got a right to do that, even if it is war time, they ain't got a right to treat a Christian like he was a dead dawg."

"They got a right to do anythin' they goddam please,

buddy. Who's goin' to stop 'em I'd like to know," cried the red-faced man.

"If he was an awficer, they wouldn't throw him over like that," came the shrill hysterical voice again.

"Cut that," said someone else, "no use gettin' in wrong juss for the sake of talkin'."

"But ain't it dangerous, waitin' round up here so near where those fellers are with that sickness," whispered Fuselli to the man next him.

"Reckon it is, buddy," came the other man's voice dully.

Fuselli started making his way toward the door.

"Lemme out, fellers, I'm sick," he said. "Shoot," he was thinking, "I'll tell 'em the place was closed; they'll never come to look."

As he opened the door he thought of himself crawling back to his bunk and feeling his neck swell and his hands burn with fever and his arms and legs stiffen until everything would be effaced in the blackness of death. But the roar of the wind and the lash of the spray as he staggered back along the deck drowned all other thought.

Fuselli and another man carried the dripping garbage-can up the ladder that led up from the mess hall. It smelt of rancid grease and coffee grounds and greasy juice trickled over their fingers as they struggled with it. At last they burst out on to the deck where a free wind blew out of the black night. They staggered unsteadily to the rail and emptied the pail into the darkness. The splash was lost in the sound of the waves and of churned water fleeing along the sides. Fuselli leaned over the rail and looked down at the faint phosphorescence that was the only light in the whole black gulf. He had never seen such darkness before. He clutched hold of the rail with both hands, feeling lost and terrified in the blackness, in the roaring of the wind in his ears and the sound of churned water flowing astern. The alternative was the stench of below decks.

"I'll bring down the rosie, don't you bother," he said to the

other man, kicking the can that gave out a ringing sound as he spoke.

He strained his eyes to make out something. The darkness seemed to press in upon his eyeballs blinding him. Suddenly he noticed voices near him. Two men were talking.

"I ain't never seen the sea before this, I didn't know it was like this."

"We're in the zone, now."

"That means we may go down any minute."

"Yare."

"Lordy, how black it is. . . . It'd be awful to drown in the dark like this."

"It'd be over soon."

"Say, Fred, have you ever been so skeered that . . . ?"

"D'you feel a-skeert?"

"Feel my hand, Fred. . . . No. . . . There it is. God, it's so hellish black you can't see yer own hand."

"It's cold. Why are you shiverin' so? God, I wish I had a drink."

"I ain't never seen the sea before. I didn't know . . ."

Fuselli heard distinctly the man's teeth chattering in the darkness.

"God, pull yerself together, kid. You can't be skeered like this."

"O God!"

There was a long pause. Fuselli heard nothing but the churned water speeding along the ship's side and the wind roaring in his ears.

"I ain't never seen the sea before this time, Fred, an' it sort o' gits my goat, all this sickness an' all. . . . They dropped three of 'em overboard yesterday."

"Hell, kid, don't think of it."

"Say, Fred, if I . . . if I . . . if you're saved, Fred, an' not me, you'll write to my folks, won't you?"

"Indeed I will. But I reckon you an' me'll both go down together."

"Don't say that. An' you won't forget to write that girl I gave you the address of?"

"You'll do the same for me?"

"Oh no, Fred, I'll never see land. . . . Oh, it's no use. An' I feel so well an' husky. . . . I don't want to die. I can't die like this."

"If it only wasn't so goddam black."

DEATH OF A SOLDIER

FROM

"SQUAD" BY JAMES B. WHARTON

Over endless paths, the single column winds through the woods, through thick, black patches, out into the open and comparative light, then back again into the dark. The woods reeks with the acrid fumes of gases, mingled with an odor of decayed flesh. It is near dawn now, and senses freshen. Anderson becomes aware that the odor is not like that of any carrion he ever smelled.

"Thet th' gas?" he wonders to himself. "Or—or—maybe human carrion has anotheh smell?"

He stumbles on dazedly—one moment out of sight of O'Connors' back—two rapid lurches forward—to catch up and feel him near.

"Gawd, Ah don' wan' git los' alone—here," he says to himself.

As he lurches along, he just misses stepping on the feet of a man lying beside the path. He lies there just as if he had dropped out of the column and fallen asleep . . . yet death seems close, all about in the gradually graying woods.

A halt, where the path, a wagon-trail, skirts the side of a steep hill.

"Dig in," says the Lieutenant, very weary, as he limps among the Fourth Platoon. "Get under ground. A barrage may drop down here any minute."

"Hell, I'm not gonna dig nowhere," O'Connors growls, after the Lieutenant passes. "Feller can't walk all night an' dig a goddam hole all day. Guy's gotta sleep sometime."

"Look at those trees, Mike." Gray points into the forest.

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By the daylight, the frightful scars of shell-fire appear. Trees are split and toppled to the ground, bark gashed, limbs lopped off.

They stand and kneel over packs, or squat beside them, fatigued, tempted to flop down on the ground just as they are and sleep endlessly.

Overhead, close overhead, so close that it vibrates through the air, comes a livid, numbing scream, a roar of movement through the air. It ends in a deafening, blasting crash. It flattens every one against the ground. Stillness, for a moment, while earth falls about, and farther off, swishes and thuds sound among the trees. Human cries, agonized with fear and pain, break the suspense. Along the trail, now, soldiers are running towards and away from the place of the explosion. For a few minutes there is only confusion. At the end of a wail, a resonant voice shouts:

"First Aid Men!"

Among the soldiers milling along the wagon-trail, a couple of Red Cross brassards appear, disappear and reappear. An officer goes by, carried in the arms of two men. Blood drips from his foot. A group of soldiers struggles along awkwardly with a bundle in a shelter-half. A figure—all distorted—goes by on a litter.

"Where's th' Dressin' Station?"

"Dunno."

"Hell, Christ, where's th' Dressin' Station?"

"Up th' hill."

"No, it ain't, it's along the trail."

"Along th' trail, all right, come on."

The seven soldiers and Corporal of the Last Squad look over their shoulders in awe. Then all of them—O'Connors too—without a word take out their entrenching tools—shovel and pick and ax—bayonets and mess kits, and dig. They bore into the side of the hill. It is new and strange to claw into the earth like that, but it comes instinctively. They feel a tremen-

dous urge to get away from the open, to worm into the ground, to thicken clothes, and the skin of bodies, with sticks and stones and earth.

The sun mounts and its rays filter through the trees. The summer day warms the woods. Flies buzz, alight and crawl across faces. The shrouded forms stir. Here a hand brushes across a cheek. There a figure turns over and groans. Gray sits up in his trough of earth.

"Dam' flies won't let a fellow sleep," he mutters. He flaps aside his blanket and emerges onto the trail.

"Who wants to eat?" he calls.

Anderson awakes, rubs his eyes, rises up.

"Eeeoww," yawns O'Connors. "Here it is to-morrow an' none of us knocked off yet. Th' Lieutenant'll be disappointed, won't he?"

"Don' be anxious, Mike, we-all got plenty o' time yet. It was hot enough fo' me at daybreak this mo'nin' fo' anotheh twenty-fo' houhs."

"Djou say somepin 'bout eatin', Corp?"

"Yep, if you two'll collect up all the canteens, we'll go off an' see what we can salvage."

"All right, Corp'ril," says Anderson, and gathers the empty canteens, pulling each one out of its canvas sack, where it lies fastened to its cartridge belt outside the several holes.

The woods is honey-combed with holes, where soldiers sleep or dig in deeper. As the Squad mates go along, they ask their way.

"Yeah, there's a stream a kilo down th' trail, by an aque-duc', an' there're rations everywhere. But, fer Gawd's sake, keep under cover. There're plenty o' Boch 'planes overhead, an' if they get onto us in this woods, there'll be no end o' shellin' 'round here."

Already they see soldiers coming towards them along the trail, with dripping canteens slung on sticks across shoulders, with tubs and cans and loaves of bread.

"Come on," O'Connors urges. "I've got a terrible thirst an' a worse hunger."

The woods, just off the trail, is a havoc of abandonment. Everywhere are dugout encampments, void of life, but with no end of stores and equipment scattered about. Cookers stand with dead fires in ovens and cold pots on top. Horses lie dead, tied to trees, with bellies ripped open by shell fragments. Everywhere are deserted field pieces, rifles, gas masks, clothes, tools, instruments and helmets, gashed and lying beside blood stains.

"Who yuh reckon pulled out'n here so sudden?"

"An engineer outfit, I guess. I see 1006th Engineers marked on all the stuff. Guess the barrage scattered 'em."

"I'll say it scattered 'em. Th' banjo an' anchor boys ain't used to this kinda place."

"Where yuh reckon th' Fritzies are? They bin heah, yuh reckon?"

"'Course not, when it's them laid th' barrage. Use yer ivory, Shorty."

"Thet's so. Ah reckon they mus' be a long waiy off yet. Gawd, if it's like this heah, what yuh reckon it's like when yuh git real close up?"

Farther along, beside the trail, lies that man Anderson just missed treading on before sunrise. He lies on his back, feet crossed, a splotch of dried blood on his gas mask in the alert position over his chest, its rubber mouth-piece and his two thumbs in his open mouth. The ghastly pallor and rigidity of death are over his features.

"How'd he git it, d'you guess?" asks O'Connors, pausing beside the body.

"Guess he got it through the chest," Gray replies.

"But why's he got his mask on—fer he must 'a' bin puttin' it on er takin' it off when he got it?"

"Hell, Mike, don't ask me!" Gray exclaims. "Let's go!"

"Yes, let's go," Anderson puts in quickly.

"That's the first dead person I ever saw, Mike," Gray says.

"Not fer me, it ain't" says O'Connors. "I've seen 'em back home. I wuz in a house one night where a feller killed a jane, an' th' jane's feller killed th' first guy. It wuz a terrible mess."

As they move off, they see an officer—silver crosses on his shoulders—coming towards them at the head of a pick and shovel detail.

"That's good," says Anderson. "Ah'd jus' as lief not see that fellah every time Ah go tuh get a drink."

"You babies better wise up," O'Connors advises. "We're in th' war now."

They come to the stream, by the aqueduct, drink and fill the canteens. They poke about among the desolation.

"We'll take everything we need," says Gray. "Looks like there'd been too many casualties 'round here for any one to come back to claim anything."

"Then here goes," O'Connors answers. "There's a good Springfield I'd ruther have than my bloody Enfield, an' a automatic an' that shovel an' that cartoon o' cigarettes—let's see what they are—twenty thousand Omars. Jesus! Smokes enough ferever!"

"Lawd, we don' wrong tuh carry anythin' up into this woods on ahr backs. We could 'a' come up here naked an' neveh suffice'd want fo' nothin'."

They load themselves greedily with provisions—loaves of bread, cans of butter, molasses, beef, bacon, beans, coffee, milk—and bits of equipment. Each is careful to find an extra entrenching tool.

"Thet's th' handiest thin' Ah've seen yet tuh hev in this wa'," says Anderson, as he adds a long-handled shovel to the canteens and provisions piled on his shoulders.

As they arrive back at the Squad holes, Anderson turns to Gray:

"Shall Ah make this stuff up, Corp'ril? Ah done a bit o' cookin' back home."

"Go to it, Shorty."

"All right. Fetch me some twigs."

He builds a fireplace of stones, kindles a fire, heats cans of beef and beans and serves them out. Then he scrapes the cans and cooks coffee.

"Hey, yuh high school boys, don't yuh-all wanta eat?" he calls towards the hole of Allen and Whittaker, the only two members of the Squad who haven't clustered around the fire.

"N-no thanks."

"Them two's takin' th' war awful serious," remarks O'Connors, as he gulps his coffee. "They ain't bin outa the'r holes to take th' air all day. All they do's dig. . . . Say, you guys, you tryin' to git to China?"

But Anderson takes the remnants of a tin of coffee over to the two:

"Yuh-all'd bettah drink this. Neveh know when yuh'll get anotheh. May move out'n here, yuh know, up fo'a'd. We ain't nowheah neah th' Front yet."

"Aw, you must be kidding," one of them says. "Not near the Front yet, an' with all that shelling this morning!"

By the scant daylight, the infantry digs deeper under the surface of the ground, farther into the side of the hill. For, from over the top of it, that screaming shell came. After dark, they crawl into their holes and wrap themselves up.

"Saiy, Jim," Anderson turns towards Marzulak, on his left. "Ah didn't leave enough leeway fo' mah laigs. They've gotta hang out'n th' open."

"Dat's de trouble wid bein' so long, Shorty, you gotta handle more dirt dan de rest of us."

"Ah reckon they won't get in no shell's waiy. They may be long, but at thet, they don' take up much space in this whole woods."

"Sure dey'll keep 'til mornin'. It's quiet enough here now, anyhow. But can you beat dis war? Not a Heinie sighted yet."

"Gawd, Jim, youah anxious. Th' wa's movin' fas' enough fo' me. Ah cain bide mah time fo' Ah sees a Fritz. Reckon that'll come soon enough."

For a while, cigarette embers glow out of the holes. One by one, they flick out.

Sometime during the night the cry—GAS!—leaps from mouth to mouth through the woods. The soldiers fumble into masks, and begin to fall off to sleep, breathing noisily and drooling through the rubber mouth-pieces, until some one gives the—All Clear!—signal.

Later, during the night, they are startled awake by the sirenic scream and simultaneous burst of a shell. Then that significant pause, while Gray listens. He knows the burst was close, for earth falls about him and smoke drifts across his face as he raises himself up and peers into the darkness.

"Help—oh—help—take me out—oh, Gawd—take me out o' heah!"

"Who's that?" Gray asks, as he quits his hole.

"Me, Corp'ril, Anderson—it's got me bad—oh, Jesus Christ—oh, Gawd!"

Through the woods, shells shriek and burst, burst and shriek. Earth sprays through the trees and fragments of flying steel whine and drone through the air and smack against the ground. Twice Gray flattens himself as he makes his way towards Anderson's hole, only a few yards distant from his own.

"Where'd you get it? Shorty?"

"All oveh—oh, Christ—oh, Gawd—Ah'm done fo'!"

"Come on, Squad, four of you to carry Anderson to the Dressing Station!"

The detonations throughout the woods muffle his voice. No one appears out of his hole. Anderson moans and screams. Gray, frantic, leans over and pokes Marzulak:

"For God's sake, Jim, come on, we've got to do something!"

The Serb comes out. After him O'Connors and Waglith.

"All right, there're four of us now. No litters. Gimme your shelter-half, Jim!"

They slip the canvas under Anderson, who complains every moment of the pain, take a corner each and set out along the trail. As they go, they ask their way.

"Along the trail, until the first turn to the left. Then straight up the hill. There's a sign there with a Red Cross on it."

"Tough luck, buddy," comes another voice out of the darkness.

"Oh, Christ—mah laigs—how they hurt!"

The wounded man raves deliriously:

"Oh, Christ—thet hoss mus' 'a' fell on me—oh, Andy—pull 'im off—but easy—easy—it hurts—he's on mah laigs—he's hurtin' 'em—he's breakin' 'em—oh, Gawd—oh, Gawd—oh, Gawd!"

Then he breaks back into the present:

"Did Jim get it too—or them boys?"

"No, Shorty, I'm here beside you an' de boys're all right."

"Oh motheh—oh, motheh—oh, motheh!"

He moans in a rhythmic way, commencing low down on the scale and mounting, mounting, mounting, until his voice is a scream.

Rain patters down as the group pushes painfully through the woods. It loses the trail and plunges into the wet bushes, twisting and dragging the wounded man until he faints.

"That's better," says Gray. "He was making so much noise I's afraid the Boche might hear us—for maybe the lines aren't so far off."

The quietness of Anderson relieves the tension.

"Where's he hit, Corp?" asks O'Connors.

"Got it across the legs, seems like. His left knee here's all messed up an' there's some jagged H.E. stuck in the heel of his shoe. Dam' stuff's been burning an' cutting into my hands where I'm holding him."

"But that ain't all of it, Corp," Waglith puts in. "His left hand here's all gooey."

"Yeah, it got him bad."

"Funny thing, Corp," says O'Connors, as he looks across Anderson's shattered body at Gray. "When I first heard yer voice callin' back there, I couldn't git outa my hole. I knew I oughta, but I felt paralyzed."

"Me, too," says Marzulak.

"Jesus, I couldn't even think," Waglith adds.

Ahead, they see a 75 mm. gun, in position under its camouflage. Behind it is the dark entrance to the crew's dugout. Gray shouts down:

"Is there a Dressing Station 'round here? We've got a badly wounded man with us."

A voice grumbles below. A soldier pokes his head up and emerges. On his arm is a Red Cross brassard.

"This th' Dressin' Station?" asks Gray.

"No—where's your man?"

He looks at Anderson, quiet, eyes closed over his white face, and breathing raucously. He places his hand gently over Anderson's abdomen. He takes it away and sees it covered with blood.

"Nothin' to do for that. He's done for."

Gray's eyes, guided by the movement of the other's hand, rest on Anderson's abdomen. Blouse and breeches are distended and bloody.

"Oh, God," he ejaculates. "He's split wide open. Guess he never knew it himself."

"But there's a Battalion Dressin' Station just over there," the Red Cross man is saying. "Follow that path, there. It's only twenty yards down it. A big dugout."

The four Squad mates reach the dugout with the disheveled bundle. As their feet scrape against the logs corduroyed over its sloping entrance, from below the curtain that blocks the way, a voice shouts out:

"Don't bring any one down here if there's gas on him!"

A hand pulls aside the gas curtain and a face appears:

"If there's any gas on that man, you've gotta strip him before you bring him in here."

"No—no gas," Gray answers. "It's a shell wound."

"All right. Come on."

They lay Anderson gently over an open space on the earthen floor of the dugout. The underground chamber is timbered heavily overhead and lighted by candles melted on wooden boxes. The air is smoky and foul with the odors of sweat and antiseptics. One of the Medical Officers, moving about among the litters lined against the walls, comes to Anderson and leans over him. The wounded man opens his eyes:

"Watch—motheh—watch—Ah'm suffocatin—Ah cain't breathe—Ah'm dyin' Ah reckon—Ah'm dyin' shuah . . ."

Already the pallor of death is over his face. His features stiffen. His lungs are soaked. He drowns in his own blood.

THROUGH THE WHEAT

FROM

"THROUGH THE WHEAT" BY THOMAS BOYD

To the weary platoon, their thinned ranks huddled all day long in the small clump of woods, night came on slowly and inexorably. The sun had disappeared, and, one by one, elflike stars became apparent, twinkling like shaking jewels through the black curtain of the heavens. At sunset orders had been received for the platoon to be prepared to leave at any moment. Their rifles were lying by their sides, the men were sprawled on the damp ground, their heads resting on their combat packs.

Some one touched a lighted match to a cigarette. It glowed softly in the darkness, a bright, inquisitive eye.

"Put out that God-damned light," Lieutenant Bedford whispered hoarsely. "Do you want us all to get shot up?"

Soon at the edge of the woods the branches were parted and a tense voice called: "Where is Lieutenant Bedford?"

It was a messenger from battalion headquarters carrying orders for the platoon to move. The summons was passed along from squad to squad, a disagreeable secret hurriedly disposed of. The men slung their packs and, holding their rifles in front of them, filed slowly and carefully out of the woods to form in a column of twos.

Lieutenant Bedford in front and Sergeant Ryan in rear—as if, Hicks thought, some of the men were thinking of deserting—the men marched off, joining the other platoons in the middle of the field. Lieutenant Bedford called:

"Pass the word along to keep quiet; we're within hearing distance of the front lines."

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On both sides the artillery was silent. Occasionally a machine-gun would fire a string of bullets the sound of which died in the stillness without an echo.

The platoon dragged slowly on, their legs soaked around the knees from the dew nestling on the tall wheat. For perhaps a mile they had marched, and the platoon, like a sensitive instrument, was beginning to have an unaccountable perception of danger, when shoes were heard swishing through the heavy wheat, and a voice said:

"Turn around, you damned fools. Do you want to walk straight into the German trenches!"

The men breathed relievedly. Apparently they were not going immediately to attack. Recovering, they began audibly to curse the lieutenant.

"The dirty German spy. What the hell does he think he's doing?"

"Ought to be back at G.H.Q. with the rest of the dummies."

The lieutenant, unable to distinguish the mumbling voices as belonging to any particular persons, vowed to himself that when the platoon was relieved and back in a rest camp, he would give them extra fatigue duty for a month.

They were coming to another woods, and within a few yards of its fringes some officers stepped out and halted them.

"All right, here you are."

"Lieutenant, swing your men right in here and don't let any one get out of the woods."

The men backed in among the trees and lay down, their packs, raising their shoulders from the ground, protecting them from the moisture. They lay silent, with their rifles cradled in their arms. No one seemed to mind the wet of the grass or the chill of the air. They were all silent and rather full of fear. Time was unknown. They might have been there a year—a minute—an aeon.

Just as the trees, in a clump of woods, perhaps a mile away, were beginning to come out against the sluggish sky like sharp, delicate etchings, the batteries awoke. After the first flock of

shells, sounding like black, screaming spirits, were fired, the men in the woods were fully aroused and many of them were standing.

"Uh-h-h, did you hear that bunch of sand-bags?"

"They sounded as if they came from a thousand miles."

Another salvo was fired, the shells droning lazily over the heads of the men and crashing terrifically more than a mile distant.

And then the smaller guns were unlimbered.

The spiteful crack of the seventy-fives turned the funereal music into a scherzo. In retaliation the German batteries, the heavier ones, began, their shells flying high overhead.

Lieutenant Bedford jumped up. "All right, Third Platoon. Up you come. Keep straight ahead and remember your three-yard interval. If any one gets hit, let him lie." And then, as if he were uncertain, as if he wanted to convince himself of the actuality of the words he had just spoken, he added: "Those are the orders."

"I always knew they hated the Third," said Lepere, "but blamed if I knew they hated our guts so much that they put us in the first wave."

But Kahl only grinned. He was conscious of a feeling as if his face had become frozen and as if his chin were about to drop off. It hung slackly and his teeth came unnaturally together when he clinched his jaws. He tightened the chin-strap of his helmet, guarding against the chance of losing his chin. Next, his feet felt so awfully heavy. They would barely permit themselves to be lifted from the ground. They had become separate identities, and as he became conscious of them he felt them to be unfamiliar.

"Damn this mud," he told himself, though knowing well that there was no mud weighing down his feet.

After pounding away for fifteen minutes, the smaller artillery stopped. The whistle blew and the men advanced, stepping out in the open where the risen sun made them hideously conspicuous. The field separating the woods stretched far on either

side, and was covered with green-stemmed wheat that reached hip-high.

Kahl, glancing over his shoulder, saw the rays of the sun flashing from the clean bayonets, the bayonets the men so often had jabbed into sacks of sand and straw.

The sergeant in charge of the first wave set the pace, which was frightfully slow. Somewhere, farther down the line, men began to object to the snail-like progress.

"Yes," thought Kahl, "it's amusing that we walk so slowly when we are right out in plain sight." It struck him as odd that the line was not being fired upon, and then he explained it to himself by the notion that the heavy barrage had driven the enemy back. But what if it hadn't—what if the Germans are just waiting until we get right almost into the woods. Wouldn't that be a mess! And what a bore, this moping through the wet smoky wheat. He wondered whether his knees were bleeding. Curse it! His neck was stiff. Maybe he could limber it up if he shook his head. . . . No, it couldn't be done. It didn't work.

The first wave entered the woods where the enemy was without firing a shot or being fired at. The second wave entered, and the third, and the fourth.

Kahl, parting the leaves with his bayonet, unexpectedly looked out upon a clearing, and the sight he saw made him exclaim to the man next to him:

"Oh, Jimmy, this must be some joke. Look at all those fellows asleep there."

In the clearing, lying flat on their backs, were five soldiers, their legs stretched out. They wore no shoes over their heavy woollen hose.

Hicks drew over toward him and looked.

"You better get down, you lumphead," Hicks cautioned; "they aren't asleep."

Together they crawled out toward the motionless figures. By this time Lepere, Cole, and Pietrzak had come to the clearing and started to follow.

"Je-sus, Kahl! Here's a fellow out of the Eighty-third Company that I enlisted with. And he's dead as hell."

Rat-t-t ———

It was a Maxim and the men dropped to their bellies.

"Hey, you poor fool, can't you shut up?" Kahl said. "That's a Maxim."

Hicks made for behind a tree as fast as he could crawl.

"Hey, Pete," he called in an undertone, "where's the rest of the outfit?"

"I don't know," Pietrzak answered him. "That's the reason we come over here where you fellers are."

Hicks turned to Kahl. "By God, we're lost!"

The machine-gun bullets shaved the bark from the trunk of the tree behind which Hicks was lying. He flattened out, his face pressed into the grass.

"Oh, Kahl, we're lost!"

But Kahl did not hear him. Possibly he remembered what he had said earlier in the day. Possibly he was really a hero. Possibly he again saw himself as a little boy playing Indian in the back yard. Whatever were his thoughts, he rose to one knee, and, after peering intently in the direction from which the bullets had come, he raised his rifle to his shoulder and sighted along the shining barrel.

Rat-t-t-t-tat.

A Maxim, but from an oblique direction, was firing, and Kahl sprawled on his face, his right arm falling over the shiny barrel of his rifle. Then other machine-guns rained their bullets into the clearing, and the men clawed at the ground in an effort to lower their bodies beneath the sweep of the lead.

"What'll we do, Hicks?" asked Pietrzak.

The tender green leaves from the trunk of the tree behind which Hicks was secure fluttered to the ground, clipped by the machine-gun fire.

"I don't know, but we can't stay here. Why don't you find the rest of the gang?"

"Why don't you?"

"Well. . . ." Hicks started to crawl back from the clearing into the woods. After he had wriggled his body about fifty yards he rose to his feet and ran in the general direction of which he had last seen the company. Breaking through the woods, he met Captain Powers.

"Captain Powers, there's a squad of us up there, and we're lost. We don't know what to do. The men are in a clearing, and they're afraid to move because they're right in sight of a nest of machine-guns. Do you know where the platoon is? What shall we do?"

And in a Shakespearian voice Captain Powers told Hicks to return to his squad and lead them in a charge on the machine-gun nest.

"Aye, aye, sir." Hicks turned and squirmed back through the woods to the clearing. "Like hell we'll advance," he thought. "The poor fool."

Hicks reached the clearing at the same time the German machine-guns momentarily stopped.

"Ja find 'em, Hicks?"

"No, but I saw Powers. If we made a half circle back to the left we might find 'em."

"Sounds good enough to try."

They were crawling, crawling on their bellies, in single file, when Pugh stopped and called with an exultant lilt in his voice:

"Oh-o, here's one Squarehead that's kissed his papa good-by. Right through the eye."

The men in rear veered off so as not to see the dead body. A short distance away some one was moaning weakly. Hicks stopped. "Another one of our guys hit, I betcha."

They crawled eagerly and yet fearfully toward the noises. Seen through the trees bandy-legged Funk was supporting the head of little Halvorsen and trying to get him to open his eyes. Beside him was Lieutenant Bedford, saying:

"You're crazy, Funk. The kid's gone, but we'll see if anything can be done."

Funk was softly calling: "Hank, oh, Hank, ain't you got anything to say?"

Hicks got to his feet and came beside the group that was staring at the dead face of Halvorsen.

"What's that? Little Hank get it? Je's, that bad."

And Pugh: "Poor little fellah. I give him a hunnerd francs the other day. But he sure is welcome to it."

Funk straightened his body, letting the head of Halvorsen touch the ground. Clinching his fist, he raised it above his head and shook it toward the woods: "We'll get you, you dirty ——" He could not find the word with which he wanted to characterize the inhumanity of the Germans.

Bedford grasped at his arm: "Get down, you damned fool. Do you want to get hit, too?"

The platoon had begun the advance through the woods in good order, but after it had reached the more dense part the German machine-guns commenced firing and four men fell. They tramped on, unable to see the enemy. Suddenly they realized that they had broken contact between themselves and the platoon on their left. Advancing, they wedged themselves into the German lines and made a target for enfilade fire. Then, little more to be done except get killed, they halted.

An orderly from battalion headquarters crawling through the woods carried with him the information for Captain Powers that the company was to intrench for the night. When the news reached them the platoon failed even to comment. For once their garrulous selves were stilled. The realization that they were to spend a night freighted with experiences totally new, that through the darkness they were to lie powerless to defend themselves, stunned them.

A curving line was described by Lieutenant Bedford, and the men were deployed along it at intervals. They unslung their packs, their extra bandoliers of ammunition, and began furiously to dig holes in the ground, deep enough for them to lie in without exposing their bodies. Some used their hand shovels

and picks, while others, more careless with their equipment, used their bayonets to loosen the dirt and their mess-kit lids to scoop it out.

Dusk, like powder of old blue, sifted through the trees and wrapped the shallow burrows in a friendly mystery. In their fresh-made beds, peeping through the boughs with which they had covered the tops of their holes, the men waited.

Through the long night that stretched interminably before them they peered into the darkness, fancying, as they had in the trenches, that each tree trunk was an enemy. The least noise was sufficient for overworked nerves to press the trigger of a rifle and send a volley of bullets through the leaves of the trees. The calling of a frightened bird would cause their hearts to throb violently against their ribs. When they spoke it was in the smallest of whispers, and even so conversation was peculiarly lacking.

Hicks, at times, would think of a letter that his mother had written him in which she had offered to send him a quantity of cyanide of potassium. "You know, son," she had written, "this war is not like the war that grandpapa used to tell you about. Those frightful Germans have liquid fire and deadly gases, and it is only when I think of how you would suffer if you were burned by their infernal liquid fire that I offer to send it. If you want it, just mark a cross at the bottom of your next letter." But Hicks had not marked any cross. He had laughed at the notion at first, and then, as the months slipped by, he had forgotten entirely about it. Now he wondered if he had done wisely. Suppose he were shot like the fellow in the trench the other day? Or gassed as badly as the Frenchman whom he and Pugh had carried back to the first-aid station. Yes, it would have been comforting. . . . But he revolted at the thought of poisoning himself. His early religion had been that a suicide does not better his condition. He simply lives in purgatory. It would be hellish to lie gasping forever in purgatory, Hicks thought. Dear old mother. How she had cried when he told her that he had enlisted and was to be sent almost immediately

to France. "But, mother, you were such a good patriot before I enlisted, and now you don't want me to go. What kind of patriotism is that?" he remembered having asked her. And how badly she had felt that he only spent an hour with her before he left for the training camp.

He was amused at the notion of digging holes to lie in. It is insulting, he thought, to ask a person to dig his own grave. It is barbaric.

The leaves of the trees were silvered above by the rays of the sun playing upon the dew. Morning had come.

Somewhere—and it seemed as if it were only ten yards away, a bugle blew a short and unfamiliar call.

"All right, Third Platoon!" Lieutenant Bedford's voice was hoarse with excitement.

"Forward, Third Platoon."

Hesitatingly and half-whimpering, the platoon climbed out from their holes, over which they had carefully placed boughs of trees to keep reconnoitering airplanes from seeing the freshly dug dirt.

Hicks's helmet felt as if it were about to come off. It wobbled from one side to the other. His face was frozen, and when he wanted to speak out he felt that he could not because the muscles that controlled his mouth refused to respond. At first he was intensely aware of his legs, but, surging along with the rest of the platoon, he soon forgot them.

Three Germans were rising up in front of him. "Don't those queer little caps of theirs look funny?" he thought, and, from the hip, he fired his automatic rifle at them. One fell and the others lifted their hands in the air and bellowed: "Kamerad! Kamerad!" Hicks passed by them unheeding. More Germans. The woods were filled with Germans. But the rest of them wore heavy steel helmets that covered their foreheads and ears.

"You dirty bastards!" Hicks heard some one scream.

By God, he wouldn't have any liquid fire poured on him. "Johnston!" he called. But Johnston, his leader, was not there.

Hicks's last clip had been emptied of shells. There were no more in his *musette* bag. It wasn't possible! Johnston must be some place near, ready to give him more clips. But no! He threw his rifle away in disgust. A few yards farther he saw the back of an olive-drab uniform, and by one of the hands that was connected to the uniform was clutched a rifle. Hicks snatched the rifle, unbuckled the cartridge-belt from the uniform, and hurried blindly on. A deep ravine was in front of him. He half jumped, half stumbled across it, and found himself once more in a wheat-field. There was no one in sight. He scrambled back over the ravine and through the woods again, frightened but defiant. Wherever he looked as he went back through the woods, men were lying. Some of them lay quite still. Others moaned and cried alternately. But Hicks paid no heed. He was still hurrying on, his head up and his nostrils wide, when some one called:

"Here, Hicks, get busy and round up some of these Square-heads." It was Ryan.

Hicks felt as if he had been struck in the stomach with a brick. He laughed nervously. "Sure."

Nine Germans stood together with their hands raised high above their heads. Their knees were shaking badly and they looked first to one side and then to the other. Docile sheep, he led them back to the village where he turned them over to a reserve regiment.

On the way back to join his platoon he met a man who looked familiar. "Say, fellow, don't you belong to A Company, of the Fifth?"

The man turned. "I did," he said. "I don't believe there is any more A Company."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, we attacked this morning through an open space in the woods," the man told him.

"And they're all dead? Fellah, I've got a cousin in that outfit. Show me where they went over."

They walked back to the clearing together. Men were lying

around in all manner of postures, and much more thickly than the men in the woods.

"What was your cousin's name, buddy?"

"Williams, Paul Williams," Hicks jerked out. "He was a tall, dark-haired fellow, about nineteen?"

"Nope. Might have seen him, but I don't remember his name."

Hicks covered the entire field, stopping closely to peer into the face of each of the men who was not a German soldier. As he was turning away from a man who was lying upon his back, his arms and legs stretched wide, and over whom he had stood longer than usual because the face reminded him somewhat of his cousin, the man's eyelids partly opened, and in a voice in which there was little strength, called: "Soldier! Oh, soldier! Don't let that damned Squarehead get me. Don't leave me alone with him. He'll kill me."

"No, he won't, buddy. He's all right." Hicks spoke reassuringly. For a moment he could not think whom the man was speaking of, but then he recollected that a German Red Cross attendant had been busy in the field, binding the wounds of the soldiers. Hicks looked around and saw the attendant a few yards off. He beckoned to him, and tried to illustrate by motions that he wanted the soldier carried back to the first-aid station.

The German came over, lowered his head to the soldier's chest. "Nein. Caput." He pointed to a rust-colored spot on the soldier's tunic over the heart. While Hicks was standing there, wondering what to do, the soldier's eyelids fluttered, he breathed once and deeply—and died.

NO HIDING PLACE

FROM

"WINGS ON MY FEET" BY HOWARD W. ODUM

Thought I had come to judgment day, first night I got caught up front near battle-line. 'Way off on one side big storm comin' up, black clouds risin', deep thunder rollin', bright lightnin' flashin'. On other side deep rumble an' flash of big guns like thunder an' lightnin' only mo' so. Crack of guns on one side sound like claps of thunder while peals of thunder on other side sound also like big growlin' guns. Then you see that forked lightning, then you hear that rollin' thunder. Shells go screamin' like movin' thunder and guns flash fire like scorchin' lightning. Shrapnel fire rush 'cross black sky like ball lightnin' I seen one time in big storm, then bustin' like sheet o' lightning spreadin' all over God's heaven. Oh, my God, wished I wus in heaven settin' down.

I looked toward that Northern pole,
An' seed black clouds of fire roll;
Oh, lightnin' flashin' an' thunder rollin',
Oh, lightnin' flashin' an' thunder rollin',
Lord, I know my time ain't long.

Well, guess I wus tremblin' like leaf, yet I ain't bother yet, I ain't bother yet, I ain't bother yet. Nothin' to do 'bout it, goddam. I don't see no guns, I don't feel no bullets, jes' judgment day. Oh, Lord, wish I was in heaven settin' down. Rain begin to po', big guns gittin' nearer, shells bustin' 'round us. Oh, my Lord, wish I wus in heaven settin' down. But I ain't seen nothing like I'm gonna see. Whut wus I doin' there, how

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did I git out? I'll tell you 'bout it maybe, tell 'bout it maybe some day. War never got me, never will. Got my buddies, never got me.

'Bout that time wus big shell comin' over. I'm so skeered don't know whether my Lord passin' by or mo' like big freight train rollin' through black clouds. So I says to boys lyin' in deep muddy place, I been ridin' heap o' trains in my day, but don't believe I'm gonna flag that fast freight! I'm gonna ride them cushions to the promised land.

One o' these days 'bout twelve o'clock,
This old worl' gonna reel an' rock,
I'm gonna leave, I'm gonna ride,
Six white hosses side by side.

Oh, my Lord, wished I wus in Georgia singin' chain-gang blues. But that don't do me no good, nothin' to do 'bout it, goddam. I'm wonderin', will I ever git home again. Sholy will tell 'em 'bout it, talk about it. Eve'ything I ever done come befo' me under same persimmon tree, come befo' me jes' like gourd vine. Talk about it; war an' me must 'a' been buddies 'scusin' why didn't shell git me? Big shell hit camp kitchen an' blowed big black cook from North Car'lina 'bout fifty feet; blowed him clean up in tree, then bus' open tree. Po' boy went to see his Jesus.

Oh, the green trees a bowin'
An' po' sinner stan' tremblin'
Well, trumpet sound in my soul,
An' I ain't got long to stay here.

'Nother shell bust up bank o' dirt behind me and shove me over in shell-hole; jes' 'bout cover me up. Dirt was what save me, dirt save me jes' like time blastin' fuse went off too soon in railroad tunnel, in sweet ole Tennessee.

Shells an' lightnin' make night look like day. Big guns

belchin' hell-fire. Could see boys startin' an' fallin', trees bein' split an' busted, teams an' trucks runnin' like army of the Lord. Horses and men screamin' an' dyin', big guns boomin', big shells bustin'. Oh, my Lord, wished I was in heaven settin' down.

Went down to rocks to hide my face,
Well, rocks cried out, "No hidin'-place."

Big ammunition dump 'bout half-mile from where we wus startin' an' fallin', runnin' an' hidin'. 'Bout that time big shell hit dump an' look like whole worl' comin' to end sho' 'nuf. After storm was over I seen big black ship flyin' up there in moonlight with black cross grinnin' down at soldiers. Jes' naturally ain't human, sho' look like black demon witch devil, got us hoodooed. Oh, my Lord, where was King Jesus ridin' storm? Seen 'nother plane come out an' fight with Heine, shells screamin', plane burnin' up and fallin' screamin' to ground, an' shells bustin' up ground where French graveyard been. Oh, my Lord, could hear my mother singing,

Then you see the world on fire,
Moon done turned to blood,
You see the elements meltin',
You see the stars a-fallin',
Then you see the coffins bustin',
Then you see the bones a-creepin',
Then you hear the tombstones crackin',
Then you see the graveyards bustin',
Earth shall reel an' totter,
Hell shall be uncapped.

I never will forgit seein' dead soldiers risin' up. Sholy could see 'em when shells an' lightnin' flash. Sometimes would jes' move arms an' legs or maybe face, sometimes would jes' turn over. Seen one po' black boy been drivin' cashion team, settin' up there holdin' lines an' grinning jes' same as if he was livin'.

Shell done got him an' team, too. Sho' look like ole Satan walkin' in this land. Soldiers with gas-masks slippin' round in shadows an' light look jes' prezacly like ghosts an' devils. Nex' day fields an' woods awful sight, many po' boys both colored an' white lyin' dead an' sleepin' on ground.

Well, war graveyard must be awful place,
Lay po' boy on his back, throw dirt in his face;
White hosses dead at head o' the branch,
Black crows whistle, buzzards dance,
Oh, my Lord, I ain't got long to stay here.

Thought I seen plenty o' ghosts some other times also. Sometimes at night when we have to fix wires or bridges or marchin' in woods, could see 'em slippin' from tree to tree or white mists shinin' like spirits ha'tnin' the promised land. Sometimes could see 'em driving team of white and black horses, movin' 'bout so easy couldn't hear 'em, but eyes shinin' an' out of their mouths come fire an' smoke. Sometime we be diggin' trenches at night and we see ghosts diggin' jes' like natural men. We think must be buddies already died after we find out they ain't natural. One time I'm sho' I seen whole company dead buddies standin' up callin' us to help 'em out. Oh, my Lord, wished I was in Georgia singin' jail-house blues.

Other times, when we wus passin' through deserted French village or stayin' in farmhouses, seen ghosts of both German an' French soldiers movin' 'bout, shadows creepin' from white house to black cellars. Seen green lights an' white flashes like spirits being carried up to heaven. Big black bats floppin' like devils with wings an' horns an' tails. Ain't no use tellin' me ain't no ghosts; I seen 'em, what you read about in mystery books I can tell you 'bout an' mo', 'cause I was there. An' one ghost sho' did tell me 'bout how buddy of mine got murdered over in United States, an' I swear I'm gonna git that dam' scoundrel if las' thing I do when I git back.

'Nuther thing make war an' battle look like judgment day

wus fact of all sorts an' kinds o' folks from all over world comin' together, talkin' an' fightin' an' mixin' like goddam. Seen folks from all over distant lands. Gonna tell folks back home. Seem like I been travelin' all over world. Been travelin' man, sho' God travelin' now.

I seen big black Africans, never seen no black men like 'em. I seen brown boys an' black, say they come from Australia. Some say come from Arabia, look like tigers, crooked fightin' knives like tiger's claws. Seen some soldiers look like Indians an' seen mo' boys look like must been Pharaoh's army. Guess didn't all of 'em git drowned, Lawdy, Mary don't you weep no mo'. Seen Belgians an' funny-lookin' Scotch fellows, Irish, an' yellow Chinese with eyes like snake, an' funny little Japanese. 'Scusin' also I seen all sorts an' kinds in American army from New York an' other places an' some German prisoners an' some others don't know who they was. I disremembers all folks I seen. Howsomever, seem like God done call them children from distant lands.

Big black boys sho' could work an' fight too. Seen 'em stretchin' 'selves heap o' time. Look like crowd back home workin' in camps, only look different, too. You oughta seen crowd black boys from Africa or Australia or some place workin' side by side with black boys come from United States. Big black boys, white teeth an' white eyes, skins shinin' black, steamin' in sun an' rain, big iron muscles standin' out. Good-God-a-mighty, watch 'em work, watch 'em dig, watch 'em sing, watch 'em talk an' joree, an' watch 'em cryin' for lovin' mama or maybe lovin' baby back home.

Seen one big black boy drivin' team black hosses. One of 'em wus screamin' stallion, white sweat an' red blood runnin' down. Oh, my Lord, black men, black hosses, black war, maybe black God, I don't know; Lord, I don't know.

One time when I was in French village I run across big black nigger come from Zululand or somewhere. Never seen such cu'i'us-lookin' big boy, heap bigger'n I was. Leastwise I been off few days an' had alcohol behind my eyes an' wus 'bout fohty

wid brakes on. So when I sees this fellow jes' naturally make me want to fight, jes' make me want to go up an' slap his face like Brer Rabbit hit tar man. So I goes over to this big boy an' says, "Howdy, big boy, howdy, me an' you an' war same things, ain't we, goddam?" He don't say nothin' an' I wus jes' rarin' back gonna tell him howdy sho' 'nuf when I seen he's grinnin' an' signifyin' he don't know what I been sayin'. So we becomes buddies and takes in town together, Lawdy, Lawd.

Boys said they heard tell 'bout one big African chief had more'n eight hundred children, more'n three hundred fifty boys an' 'bout fo' hundred girls. Lawdy, Lawd, wa'n't he a lovin' daddy? Thought I remember hearin' my mama's papa tellin' 'bout one fightin' chief killed all his children 'cause he's skeered some of 'em might grow up and take his crown 'way from him. He wa'n't free, Lawd, he wa'n't free, setting down in the kingdom. He ain't got nothin' on me. Ain't gonna ketch me worryin' 'bout keepin' no starry crown.

When I do, jes' bury me good an' deep
Big bottle booze right at my feet,
Black cat dices in my hand,
Throw seven an' 'leven in promised land.

Thought I was sorry for heap o' white buddies I seen in war. Young boys ain't 'customed to walkin' in rain an' mud, day an' night, trampin' all over face of earth. Don't know nothin' 'bout not eatin' an' sleepin' an' bein' po' boys long way from home like I does. Also mos' white soldiers has to go up front in fightin' units more'n I did. Feel sorry for 'em when they comes back, 'scusin' heap of 'em don't never git back. See 'em comin' back after battle, sore feet, can't walk, all gassed up, have to lean on one 'nother. Seen 'em cryin' an' laughin' an' cussin', look pitiful like. Faces show trouble heap more'n face of black boys. Po' boys look pale an' like nearly dead, lines in faces an' beards all dirty, eyes all sunk in, clothes all muddy

an' full o' blood. Look like they jes' 'bout gone, hungry, mad, skeered, homesick, all come befo' war jes' like gourd vine.

Some come crippled, some come lame,
Some come speakin' of Moses' name,
Old dry bones gonna rise again.

White buddies mighty funny, too, sometimes. Sometimes we sorry for 'em, sometimes we jes' have to laugh at 'em. Sometimes we don't keer if some white boys, meaner'n devil, have hard time, Lawd, we don't keer, Lawd we don't keer. Been treatin' us wrong, been hard on colored soldiers. White man been fightin' colored man. Now fightin' 'selves. Sometimes we jes' naturally makin' trouble with 'em. Sometimes when we see big white boy skeered we snicker at 'im, he look so funny an' white. Some boys take it mighty hard. Howsomever, heap of 'em mighty hard boiled, can cuss mo', fight mo', drink mo' than colored boys. Ain't got no respects for nothin'. Ain't skeered of nothin'. Run right straight into German guns, stormin' machine-gun nests, Heines shootin' an' chargin' like whole German army.

Well, never seen like since I been born,
Jerries keep a-comin', buddies done gone.

Big white boys from mountains look skeered an' don't look skeered neither. Jes' starin' at nothin' an' sayin' nothin'. Never been nowhere much an' never seen country like I has. Boys laugh at 'em 'cause didn't want salute officers. Colored soldiers salutin' all time. Told me mountain boys make mighty good soldiers, howsomever, not knowin' what war is about. Neither does I, neither my buddies.

Goin' up to war to git fine clothes
What war's about nobody knows.
Lord, don't you grieve after me.

All same to us. Me an' war same thing. Don't like it, don't know if I dislikes it, can't help it, nothin' to do about it. Well, it's rainin' here, but its stormin' on the sea. Boys settin' round waitin' for orders. Maybe skeered, maybe not. Don't show how they feels, maybe don't know theyselves. Joreein' one 'nother.

See feller over there look like he's homesick wid sinkin' blues, holler at him, "Hey, all that nigger lookin' fer is fat meat an' sundown."

"Dam' lie, all he lookin' fer is cornbread an' sunup."

"Well, ole strumpet, that's all right, blues ain't nothin' but good man feelin' bad."

"'Nuther lie, blues ain't nuthin' but woman on po' man's mind."

Boys git to playin' with sticks an' bugs, maybe with spider on ground, an' start singin' all of sudden:

Oh, bitin' spider, don't bite me,
Lawdy, bitin' spider, don't bite me.

Heap o' funny things happen and heap mo' sad ones, take me till to-morrow night to tell 'bout 'em. 'Bout funniest thing I seen, ain't funny neither, was time some buddies was out patrollin', crawlin' on bellies like snake or sumpin', an' with orders to fix up wires. Well, they got past some German officers, an' one boy crawl right smack into German officers crawlin' same way. Oughta heard him yell. We couldn't go back an' we couldn't run, 'cause we's already behind Germans, so we had to do something. Germans thought 'cause we wus behind 'em an' hollerin' like devils, must be heap of us. Thought we shot 'bout three. So we got 'em skeered and cap'n sent squad to help us an' we captured officers an' took 'em in.

After we got in camp an' light, one German officer sees me an' also recognizes my voice an' hollers, "What hell you doin' over here?"

So I says, "What hell you doin' yo'self; I'm fightin' fer Uncle Sam."

Sho' wus funny. This fellow was boy worked in same factory over in New Jersey where I did befo' war. Said he had to go to Germany to help his parents with some property, an' Germans conscript him befo' he could git away. Never did see him no mo' an' don't know what 'come of him to this day. Maybe war got him, didn't git me. He's big captain an' I'm high private in rear rank, but I gits there just the same.

Heap o' heart-breakin' things happen too. Can't count 'em. One time we wus marchin' along and buddy got killed an' nobody never did know whut hit him. Got blowed up someway, never could find out what sort bullet or shell struck 'im. 'Nother buddy worked in French town an' family of French captain. Thought he was very fond of little child of French captain who been killed in war. One day Germans captured place an' took house where French family wus an' set up lines 'gainst American army.

This buddy so worried in his mind 'bout little child gettin' hurt by Germans he jes' naturally went mad an' stormed out wid knife an' flyin' devil grenade, gonna blow Germans into promised land an' git little child. Germans got him, blowed him clean to pieces. Wa'n't necessary for him to go but nobody couldn't tell him nothin'. He wus gonna save little child. And so he gave his life for little French child. Made me very sad an' I kept hollerin', "Say, Buddy, is you hurt, is you killed?" Knowed he wus but jes' kept hollerin' to him.

'Nother sad time I recollects was when white captain from home town where my mother lived was brought back from lines wounded. They said he won big fight leadin' boys up big hill. But Jerries got him. He wus good friend to me, always helpin' me out o' trouble if I needed it. Seen me an' ask me wouldn't I go see his mother when I got back home. I told him I sholy would but mightly hard thing to do. War got him, never got me.

Funny thing 'bout this white captain. Fust time I ever heard

'bout France, heard his mama tellin' my mama 'bout her an' young husband gonna make trip to study. He wus young professor in college town, teachin' French. Young wife mighty foolish 'bout him an' always savin' an' scrapin' up eve'ything so they could make trip to France. Made it hard on my mama who wus workin' for 'em. This lady so set on husband an' trip made it hard on mama. She was gettin' house ready to go abroad, curtains an' everything makin' laundry might heavy for 'bout five weeks. Kept my mama workin' hard to help. One of my brothers wus born Friday night an' mama so eager to help white lady get off she set up in bed nex' day an' iron las' things so she could send 'em back. White woman didn't send her nothin' for pay 'cept bundle of ole rags an' jar o' mutton tallow. Lady on her way to France, po' mama needin' doctor an' ain't got no money. Hurt mama's feelin's an' never forgit hearin' her tell 'bout it.

Never would 'a' thought I be havin' name of soldier in France an' son of white lady be killed an' me takin' back word to his mama. My mama done dead an' gone sleepin' in grave, nobody to carry my troubles to. His mama fine old lady eve'y-body love, always sayin' fine things 'bout my mama. War got only son she had, never got me, neither none of my brothers. All come under same gourd vine in big war. Thought me an' war must be buddies from 'way back.

I got rainbow tied round my shoulder
Wings hitched on my feet.
Lord, don't you grieve after me.

PART VII
UNDERTONES

UNDERTONES

7

IM FELDQUARTIER

GERMAN SOLDIER'S SONG

*Im Feldquartier auf hartem Stein
Streck ich die mueden Glieder,
Und singe in die Nacht hinein
Der Liebsten meine Lieder.
Nicht ich allein hab's so gemacht,
Annemarie,
Der ferner Liebsten hat gedacht
Die ganze Kompagnie.*

*Den naechsten Wiedersehenstag
Kann, Schatz, ich dir nicht sagen.
Ich muss mich noch mit schwarzem Pack
Auf ferner Erde schlagen.
Vielleicht werd' ich bald bei dir sein,
Annemarie,
Vielleicht schon scharrt man morgen ein
Die ganze Kompagnie.*

*Und schlaegt mich eine Kugel tod,
Kann ich zu dir nicht wandern.
Dann wein dir nicht die Aeuglein rot
Und nimm dir einen andern.
Nimm dir 'nen Burschen jung und fein,
Annemarie,
Es braucht ja grad nicht einer sein
Von meiner Kompagnie.*

THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRIA, THE
DUKE OF AVARNA, TO THE AUSTRIAN-
HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

Vienna, May 23, 1915

Conformably with the orders of His Majesty, the King, his august sovereign, the undersigned Ambassador of Italy has the honor to deliver to His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary, the following communication:

"Declaration has been made, as from the fourth of this month, to the imperial and royal government of the grave motives for which Italy, confident in her good right, proclaimed annulled and henceforth without effect her treaty of alliance with Austria-Hungary, which was violated by the imperial and royal government, and resumed her liberty of action in this respect.

"The government of the King, firmly resolved to provide by all means at its disposal for safeguarding Italian rights and interests, cannot fail in its duty to take against every existing and future menace measures which events impose upon it for the fulfillment of national aspirations.

"His Majesty, the King, declares that he considers himself from to-morrow in a state of war with Austria-Hungary.

"The undersigned has the honor to make known at the same time to His Excellency, the Foreign Minister, that passports will be placed this very day at the disposal of the imperial and royal Ambassador at Rome, and he will be obliged to his excellency if he will kindly have his passports handed to him.

"Avarna."

THE WHISTLERS' ROOM

FROM

"THE WHISTLERS' ROOM" BY PAUL ALVERDES

(Translated by Basil Creighton)

The large room with the wide terrace in front and the view over the park and fields and a glimpse of the Rhine in the distance beneath a brown cloud of smoke was known throughout the hospital as the Whistlers' Room. It was named after the three soldiers who had been shot in the throat and awaited their recovery there. They had been there a long while; some said since the first year of the war. The stretcher-bearers who were the first to bandage them under fire in the shelter of ruined houses or in dugouts roofed over with planks and turf, pronounced on them a sentence of speedy death. But in defiance of all precedent and expectation they came through, for the time at any rate.

The process of healing, however, overshot its mark, for the bullet holes were covered over on the inner side of the windpipe by new flesh in such thick rolls and weals that the air passage was speedily blocked, and a new channel had to be made to meet this unforeseen threat of suffocation. So the surgeon's knife cut a small hole in the neck below the old wound, which was causing a more and more impassable block. At this point a tube was sunk into the windpipe, and the air then passed freely in and out of the lungs.

The tube was a small silver pipe of the length and thickness of the little finger. At its outer end there was a small shield, fixed at right angles, not larger than the identity disc that every one at the front wore next his skin. The purpose of it was to prevent the tube slipping into the gullet; and to prevent it falling out, there was a white tape passing through

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two eyeholes in the shield and secured behind round the neck by a double slip-knot. In itself, however, the pipe was of two parts, closely fitted together, the innermost of which was held in its place by a tiny winged screw. Three times a day it was pulled out by two small handles to be cleaned, for since they could not breathe through the nostrils, the tubes had become, as it were, the whistlers' noses. And when they were not actually bedridden they gladly cleaned them for themselves with the little round brush provided for that purpose.

After it was cleaned, the entrance of the tube had at once to be protected against dust and flies by a clean curtain. This was about the size of the hand and rectangular in form. It was cut from a thick roll of white muslin and attached to the tape with pins. It recalled the clerical band that forms part of the official garb of evangelical clergymen. Thus it was that the whistlers, with their spotless white between chin and chest, had always a ceremonial air. They were well aware of it. There was something of this in their whole bearing, and gladly they changed their bibs and tuckers several times a day for cleaner and whiter ones. When they breathed quickly or laughed, a soft, piping note, like the squeaking of mice, came from the silver mouth. Hence they were called the neck whistlers or simply the whistlers.

Talking, after being for a long while practically dumb, gave them great trouble at first, and they were glad to avoid it, particularly before strangers. When they wished to speak they had to close the mouth of the pipe with the tip of the finger. Then a thread-like stream of air found its way upwards through the throat and played on the vocal cords, or what remained of them, and they, very unwillingly roused from their torpor, emitted no more than a painful wheezing and croaking.

It was not, however, for their cracked notes that the whistlers blushed, but for this to-do with lifting their bibs and feeling with their fingers for their secret mouthpiece. This predicament they tried to disguise by every means. Were a stranger to address them on the roads through the park, or in the wide

passages and halls of the great building, where in bad weather they sometimes took their walks, they usually forbore returning an immediate answer. They looked in meditation down at their toes, or with head courteously inclined and raised eyebrows, gazed into the face of him who accosted them as though earnestly seeking within themselves for a suitable response. Meanwhile, quite without any particular object, they put up a hand to their breasts and after a moment proceeded as though to dally with a shirt button that might be concealed beneath the white pinafore. After this they began to talk and sometimes, if they gained sufficient confidence, their first silence might be exchanged for a cheerful loquacity. It was as though they wished to show that in the very understandable and, indeed, most everyday matter of being hoarse, they were not any different from other men. Why they did this they could not themselves have said, and yet they did not speak of it to each other. They all behaved as though sworn to secrecy by oath, and when a fourth was added to the group, he, from the very first, did likewise.

It was just the same, moreover, with the others in the room upstairs who had lost an arm or leg. They felt no shyness at being seen by strangers with an empty sleeve or a trouser leg dangling loose and empty; indeed some of them vaunted their docked limbs and even went so far as to instil a kind of veneration, in those who had come off more lightly, by a display of their sad stumps. Yet the scraping and creaking of the sometimes not very successful appliances with which they had to learn to walk caused them acute embarrassment before strangers. At once they came to a stop and tried to disguise the grasp for the lever that enabled them to fix the artificial joint by catching or pulling at their trousers, or by any other apparently trivial movement. They never displayed an unclothed false hand or foot, and at night when they undressed for bed they concealed the arm they had screwed off by hanging the coat over it, or the leg by leaving it carefully in a corner inside the trouser. For they were always afraid of being surprised by

outsiders, and would have liked best always to be by themselves.

Sometimes, however, visitors from outside came to distribute gifts—to the whistlers, as well, in their room. They made presents of wine, fruit and cakes, and especially of all kinds of scent with which the whistlers gladly and copiously besprinkled themselves. It is true that their sense of smell was for the time in abeyance, but they were all the more gratified to feel that they carried a pleasant aroma about with them. For all that, these occasions of munificence did not long continue. Too often the visitors came to a hasty conclusion that he who could not utter a sound, or only in a treble voice, must necessarily be stone deaf as well, and they proceeded to shout at the whistlers without mercy, and some even pulled out notebooks and wrote in enormous letters what they might just as well have said. Or they tried from the very outset to make themselves intelligible by gestures of the most exaggerated description. For the whistlers this was a gross insult. The defect which they had now adopted as a peculiarity of their own seemed to them in a sense a merit, and no longer really a defect at all. But the one that was thus falsely laid to their door wounded them to the quick. And so, no sooner had the unknown visitor entered at one door, than they took flight by another. But if they were caught in bed they pretended to be asleep, or put their fingers warningly to their lips, shook their heads with a pretence of regret, and enjoined upon the intruders an alarmed and guilty retreat.

Among themselves the whistlers held lively and intimate talks. They could do so easily in a wordless clucking speech that, in default of a stream of air to make words with, they formed by means of their lips and tongues and teeth. Their powers of comprehension had arrived at such a pitch that in the night, when lights were out and when there was no help from gestures of the hands, the three held long talks from bed to bed. It sounded like the incessant clucking and splashing in a water-butt under the changing quick patter of heavy drops.

For the low fever that seldom left the whistlers, or the influence of drugs administered for their healing, kept them often long awake. They never talked of a future and seldom of a past before the war. But of the last day at the front and of the exact circumstances in which they were wounded they never tired of giving vivid and stirring accounts, and with such leisure for recollection there was always more and more to add, and sometimes, indeed, an entirely new story was evolved and told for the first time. But not one of them showed any surprise at that.

* * * * *

There was one thing, however, to be told of the eldest of the three that could not be varied, and this was that shell splinter had smashed his jaws and his larynx. His name was Pointner, and he was a peasant's son from Bavaria. He had been in the whistlers' room for over a year, and his case was the worst of the three. A poison had infected his blood, and slowly, almost imperceptibly, his condition became hopeless. He often had to be in bed with a high temperature, and then there was little he could be tempted to eat. Though well grown and well nourished when he left home, he was now lank as a young boy. But nothing vexed him so much as when some of the convalescents from other wards picked him up like a child in their arms and offered to carry him about. A dark flush came into his cheeks, and he spat and scratched in rage and hit out unsparingly on all sides with his fever-wasted hands. He was ashamed of weighing so little. Nobody who saw him now would have guessed that he had been a butcher by trade, a master of all the secrets of the slaughter-house and an adept at making sausages. To be sure his time for that was over.

Perhaps Pointner had been once of a hot-blooded and even truculent disposition. On the cupboard beside his bed in a highly decorated frame of silver metal, he had a photograph of himself as a reservist. This frame was composed of two gnarled oak trees, whose branches, through which ran broad

scrolls bearing inscriptions, were gathered together along the top and bore the crown of a princely house. At their base amid the mighty roots was entwined a bunch of all kinds of swords, flags, rifles and cavalry lances. Between the oaks, however, reservist Pointner was to be seen, his cap, beneath which a so-called *Sechserlocke* protruded, set jauntily over one ear, and two fingers of the right hand stuck between the buttons of his tunic. In his left was jauntily held a cane bound with a plaited band from which depended a knot. His jaw was unusually strong and prominent and this gave an aggressive turn to his short stature and the amiable expression of the upper part of his face. "Reserve now has rest" was written on the photograph, and it was lightly tinted in bright colors. Nevertheless reserve had not had rest and the aggressive jaw had disappeared, a small, boneless and retreating chin taking its place. It gave his face, with the always slightly parted lips and the white gleam of the upper teeth—which had escaped unscathed—beneath the straw-colored moustache, a child-like and weak expression. And, indeed, the alteration in Pointner was more and more marked, though the old hot blood still sometimes came uppermost and made him dangerous.

Pointner had been wounded in one of the first fights with the English, and after that had lain for a week or two in a field hospital. From there one morning he found his way, in the midst of a crowd of lightly wounded cases, and quite contrary to regulations, into an emergency hospital train and got back to Germany. He was clothed in a long-skirted hospital garment of blue and white striped wool, with felt slippers on his feet. On his head he wore a plundered English sniper's cap, which he had brought with him on the stretcher into the field hospital and had never surrendered. Speechless as he was, with face and neck bandaged up to the eyes, and with no papers either, he was taken for an English prisoner throughout the journey and treated as such. Even the memory of this threw him into a rage. Certainly, the simplest thing would have been to cast away the khaki cap, but to this he could not bring him-

self. Rather than that he remained a Britisher despite himself, passed over unwelcomed and unbeflowered, and left to one side in his stretcher shedding tears of rage. It was not till later that he succeeded in making himself understood.

Nevertheless, in spite of peremptory orders, he still kept the cap safely in a lower shelf of the cupboard which served as the retreat for a different article. Now and then when neither doctor nor nurse was expected to come in, he took it out. With care he polished the badge and the chin strap till they shone, and had a long look at it, turning it about meanwhile in his delicate hands, where the whites of the nails were turning from snow white to a bluish tinge. . . .

SCHLUMP AT WAR

FROM

"SCHLUMP" (ANONYMOUS)
(Translated by Maurice Samuel)

Papa Rohaut stood before Schlump's door and twirled his hat between his big fingers. He had three daughters, pretty as pictures, and the oldest of them was Jeanne, with the plump thighs. He begged Schlump to see to it that his fields should be worked now, for they were lying fallow for the second year. "Certainly, Papa Rohaut," said Schlump, "but you know we have so few teams that we have to work the fields along the road. Because when the major comes on his rounds of inspection from Thumerie he wants to see people at work." Schlump was sorry for him, he looked so miserable, and Monsieur Doby considered old Rohaut a good sort, because he was simple and never kicked. Just a few days ago Rohaut, coming to the inn, had taken off his gigantic high boots outside, and had come in, as always, in his clean wooden sabots to pay his respects to Madame: Monsieur Doby had seen the boots standing outside and had filled them to the top with slop water. As it was dark when Father Rohaut went out, he shoved his foot nobly into the boot. And though the brown sewage squirted right up into his face, he tried it again with the other foot, to see whether the same astonishing thing would happen again.

So Rohaut went out sadly from Schlump, and scarcely had he passed across to pay his respects to Madame Doby when a fearful disaster occurred in the street outside. The little boys had cut themselves out wooden swords, had taken down the chambers from the palings and put them on their heads, and were playing soldiers and robbers. Little Ernest, the child of Widow Foulard across the way (her husband had fallen at

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Maubeuge in 1914), went at one of the robbers for all he was worth. The latter, not being a coward, came back at him, threw his sword away, and smote his enemy with bare hands on the chamber helmet so that it went down over his ears. Ernest seized the pot with both hands and tried to lift it off—but it wouldn't budge. Thereupon he began to yell as if he had been stuck on a roasting-spit. And as the voice in the pot couldn't find its way out, there was heard a weird sound—like that of a bluebottle caught in a watering-can dashing its plump body against the metal walls, humming and droning till it finds the way and crawls out of the hole. But Ernest couldn't find his way out of the hole. The boys stood around him, holding their sides with laughter, till one of them became anxious and tried to help the unfortunate Ernest. He took hold of the accursed pot with both hands and lifted. But Ernest roared even louder and the terrified boy let go. Meanwhile the mother had arrived hurriedly on the scene, and she too seized the pot with both hands, and lifted it, together with her son, right into the air, so that the little fellow jerked all his limbs about and sent forth a fearful wailing. The neighbors came running up, too, and tried everything, till they finally began to wring their hands. "He'll starve to death," said Madame Besnarde, and began to weep. In her despair the mother brought the boy in his iron mask to Schlump and asked him whether the poor boy would have to pass the rest of his life in the chamber. And when the pot became too small, what would happen? a woman asked, terrified. Schlump was of the opinion that they would have to go to the doctor; he would give them all passes. They thanked him for his wonderful idea and begged him to make out the passes at once. But Schlump explained that he wanted to go along. In the meantime a crowd had assembled in front of the Occupation office, and it divided respectfully as Schlump appeared, accompanied by the afflicted mother and the boy in the chamber. Then they fell in behind Schlump, and the procession went up to Mons-en-P. In Deux Billes the villagers came running up, and the unhappy mother, still weeping, had

to tell the story again, and the boy began to hum and drone loudly once again inside his prison. They continued on their way, with the Villagers of Deux Billes added to the procession. In Mons-en-P. they called out the doctor, and every one remained silent while he tried his best. Then he pulled a serious face, laid his head on one side, screwed up his eyes, and thought awhile. Finally he said that this case was beyond him, and they would have to go to the tinsmith. This all of them could see, and they agreed with the experienced doctor, and the mother became filled with hope again. In the meantime, however, a huge crowd had gathered round Schlump and his faithful retinue, and there was such excitement and such a tumult of voices that it was hardly possible to hear the droning in the pot. At last they came to the tinsmith, and Schlump went inside while the crowd waited.

The captain who was in charge of the battalion of recruits and who lived opposite the tinsmith's happened to be an excitable gentleman. When he saw the huge and animated crowd, heard their loud voices, saw the excited gesticulations, he was convinced that an assault on the troops was about to take place, and the people were being armed in the middle of the day by the tinsmith. He leaped to the telephone, called out the guard, and issued the alarm to the entire garrison. In five minutes the troops arrived at the double, bayonets fixed, to the rolling of drums. They surrounded the inhabitants of Mons-en-P., Deux Billes, and Loffrande, and a lieutenant stepped forth with drawn sword and called on them to surrender. In their terror the poor people called Schlump out of the smithy, and he, stepping up to the lieutenant, explained the situation in a few words. The lieutenant smiled, shoved his sword back into its scabbard, issued the command to lay down arms, and turned the detachment over to a sergeant. Then, together with Schlump, he entered the smithy. The tinsmith had set to work with his big wire cutters and was opening up the pot. The boy stood there, motionless. The mother called to him, loudly, to keep his eyes closed. A moment later she was holding her son

in her arms, and amid tears was wiping away the two strings which hung from his nose all the way down to his chin.

The lieutenant ordered the soldiers back to barracks, and went across to the captain, who in the meantime had put on his helmet, to report. But Schlump, followed by his faithful subjects, had set out in triumph again for Loffrande.

Madame Gaspard, of Drumez, stood before Schlump, resting her bony hands on her hips. She had wooden shoes on and she looked like an old, withered Christmas tree. She was as tall as a hop pole, and two thin sticks of legs, stuck into woolen stockings, issued from her shoes. The long black dress lay in thick folds about her waist, and a woolen jacket was drawn tight about her narrow breast and went halfway up her withered throat. She had a pointed Adam's apple, like a man, and it looked out between the two corded throat muscles which supported her sharp chin. Her face resembled an old Camembert cheese; a pair of gray eyes looked icily out from behind her colorless eyelids, and no eyebrows were to be seen on her sharp rectangular forehead. She really was as thin as a hop pole; only the hips stood out at right angles, like a pair of branches on which no green twigs would ever grow again. "I want to make a complaint against Madame Fontaine," she said, and looked at him angrily.

"Yes?" said Schlump.

The hop pole suddenly became animated and began to speak very swiftly.

"Yes! Do you know what that woman said? She said I told Madame Aulnoy that Madame Patard said that she had slept with Carolouis, in one bed. And of course she did sleep with Carolouis in one bed, and she still does, because I know absolutely for certain, or my name isn't Madame Gaspard, and they aren't ashamed to sleep with a Prussian—and a bow-legged one, at that. But these persons are so mean and so impudent that they say I said it to Madame Aulnoy, and Madame Aulnoy is my witness that I never spoke about that creature.

But Madame Fontaine is a liar, and she ought to be in prison anyway; she isn't ashamed to let her cow graze in my meadow every day, and once I caught her stealing clover, and her brother too . . ."

"Wait a minute, wait a minute," cried Schlump in between. "There's Carolouis, outside. He can bring Madame Fontaine here." Schlump was happy to shut her up for a moment.

"Certainly! Bring that woman here! Tell him to bring Madame Fontaine."

Schlump opened the window and called Carolouis over and told him to bring Madame Fontaine, as Madame Gaspard was waiting and had lodged a complaint against her.

In five minutes Madame Fontaine was there. She wore a filthy woolen shawl round her shoulders, and a pair of felt shoes—or what looked like felt shoes—on her feet. She immediately put her hands on her hips, which spread out broad, healthy, beside those of Madame Gaspard. Her glance shot past Madame Gaspard and she opened her mouth. Her face was as black as a stove door, and round her mouth a long gray and black beard grew in separate tufts, making that part of her face look like an English park. But on either side of her eagle nose sparkled and glittered her vivid coal-black eyes, set behind long black eyelids, while above them hung the bushy gray eyebrows. The black hair which covered her head was twisted into greasy locks which looked as though they had never been washed. She opened her mouth, and said, "*Eh bien, quoi?*"

"Madame Gaspard says that you said that Carolouis . . . or how was it, Madame Gaspard?" asked Schlump. But when the black-faced woman heard the name of Carolouis she started as if she had been stung.

"What?" she shrieked. "What? Has she been gabbling again about Carolouis? And she's had three husbands, that woman . . ."

"You had three husbands," bursts out Madame Gaspard,

"and you had them all at once, not one after the other, as I did, and . . ."

"Three husbands, and she slept with the hunchback servant, the shameless creature, the stuck-up cow, the dirty ——"

"Dirty? Who's dirty? Who's full of lice, like a Prussian? Who whores around and goes out stealing and picking things up at night? And who was it played the pimp for poor little Célestine and gave her to the M.P. for a couple of *sous* so that she had a baby by him? And who ——"

And she lifted her hands as though she wanted to grab the other woman by the hair, but the latter retreated and also showed her claws; and suddenly they went at each other, their mouths, with their tooth-gaps, opened—whereupon Schlump burst into such immoderate laughter that the two women stopped, stupefied, to look at him, then turned round and ran out of the door. As they did it simultaneously, they collided with their backsides, so that the door swung crazily back and smashed the latch against the wall.

Madame Doby came horrified out of the kitchen and stared at Schlump, who wiped the tears from his eyes and pointed at the hole in the wall.

Summer was gone long ago, and autumn too. The days followed in which it is hard to say whether winter has come yet. Now and again a damp wind passed the gable ends and shook them slightly; the bushes dripped from the eternal mist, and the latches were wet, and at regular intervals a heavy drop would splash down from the gutter on to the stone below.

The threshing had begun. The threshing machine sang shrilly, so that you could hear it all over the village. And when they fed it too heavily the monotonous melody went up by a third, and then fell down again to the old tone. The cannons in the distance beat rapid time to the tune. The girls handed up the sheaves, and every now and again a boy would jump into the barn among them and pinch them by the leg, so that they screamed loud and merrily. The wagon, piled high with yellow

sheaves, went shaking past the Occupation office, and avoided the other wagon which came back, carrying the threshed straw to the fields, where they were building a tremendous haycock. The little major in charge of the agricultural department—the one to whom Schlump sent his reports every week—had been up to the village a couple of days before. He asked Schlump all about the provender that had been laid in, about the hay, about the seed that was set aside, and about the butter he could deliver. Schlump reported, gave the figures in a brief, businesslike way, and said that he had the churning done on Thursdays, so that the peasants could make prompt deliveries. He had appointed an energetic mayoress of the village, who looked after this and settled accounts with him every week. The major seemed satisfied. He clucked his tongue, pulled at the reins, and rode off.

After him Louis Gez came into the office. He was exactly four feet ten in height and, though his shoulders slanted, just as broad. Shamelessly, he wore a pair of wide corduroy breeches, which were tied together at the bottom above his shoes; also a red neck-cloth and a round cap which slipped back on to his neck.

"You ought to grow a pair of mustaches," he told Schlump. "That's what the girls like. I've got a real beauty for you, a fine, healthy, snappy girl—you know—but I want you to do me a favor ——"

Schlump knew whom he meant; it was Hélène, across the way in Marchelles, but she was known far and wide: she had already bestowed her favors on the entire artillery regiment stationed over there.

"What's on your mind?" asked Schlump.

"I got no chaw left, Monsieur: and you know, a man without a chaw is just half a man."

"All right," said Schlump. "I'll be up in the canteen tomorrow, and I'll get you some, and some snuff for your neighbor, too, for Madame Héaulmière. But listen, Louis; is it true what they're saying about what happened in Arras?"

"Is it true? Sure. But those times were different. There used to be plenty of chaw and cognac—cognac! Say, can you get any cognac in the canteen?"

"You'll get half a bottle tomorrow. That's my promise, Louis."

"Thank you, Monsieur Émile: thank you. You know, in those days there used to be chaw and cognac—rafts of it. It happened to be the Fair in Arras, and there was a prize bull exhibition, you know. And there were the fat peasants walking through the streets, with their heavy sticks, calling after the girls and twirling their mustaches, and clinking the money in their pockets, and they looked just like their own bulls. And they had horns on their heads all right, but you couldn't see those." And Louis winked joyously and significantly. "I was attending to the big dynamo which stood near the movie on the fair-grounds. It went all by itself, and all day long I was in the saloon on the market place with pretty little Céline. That was a baby for you! And just when I was drinking my cognac they began to run and yell on the street outside, and the peasants came jamming into the saloon, with their faces red as turkeys, shaking their sticks in the air. And the women screamed, and one of them actually broke in through the window and cut her cheeks wide open. In just one second the room was full and the market place was as dead as a graveyard. I went to the door, and there in the middle of the market place was a tremendous bull. I tell you, a monster, with awful horns and a huge neck. There he was, his front feet set firm and his head tossing up and down just like a horse when he gets to feeling good. And there—I can still see it—right in front of him, not ten paces away, was a kid, playing near the well, a little girl, with no idea of anything, just singing and romping. The women opened the windows, and they began to scream and wring their hands, and didn't know what to do. Then suddenly the door opposite opened, and a woman flew out. A weak little creature—I bet you she didn't weigh ninety pounds; she ran right past the bull, grabbed up the kid and flew back,

while the bull just stared after her like the stupid animal he was. Then the women began clapping their hands and applauding, just like the crazy women in the opera in Paris.

"I was just ashamed of myself, and I was mad, because as it was the women were already just too damn cocky. But I wanted to show them something. I went slowly up to the bull, and the bull began to paw and buck again: I stand right in front of him and he stares right at me. Then, just like lightning, I grabbed him by the horns—and then, back—back—there the son of a gun was, lying on the ground.

"Well, the women just went crazy, and they applauded and cheered, and you know, Monsieur Émile—after that I had a marvelous time. Wonderful piece of work"—and he laughed and spit and stood rocking himself on his short legs.

Schlump promised him again to bring the chaw and the cognac. But Louis told him that wasn't why he had come to see him. "You know," he said, "I'm a poor man, and little Célestine, who got that baby from the M.P., lives with me. And we need wood. Won't you give me a pass so I can go out in the woods over round Marchelles and gather some?" Schlump gave him the pass, because he knew that Madame Drouart lived over there and Louis was in love with her.

His buddies, the recruits who had come with him from his home town, had long since been sent up to the front. Others had come to take their place and were now being trained in Carvin. Only a couple of clerks had been left from the old outfit.

The winds blew colder and Christmas was drawing close. One day the message orderly, who brought instructions daily from headquarters and took his reports back, told him that he would probably have to arrange quarters for a Q.M.C. detachment before long, and then he would be relieved. An hour later the telephone rang: Corporal Nebe of the Mons-en-P. Occupation office. This was the man who used to get Schlump's deliveries of eggs and butter and transmit them to the hos-

pitals. Schlump couldn't bear the sight of him because the supplies were never big enough for him, and he was mean and bad-tempered. The corporal told him that in two days a Q.M.C. detachment would be coming round, and then Schlump would be relieved. He would shortly get his marching orders. Schlump hung the receiver up angrily, because he had felt the mean joy in the other's voice.

In the afternoon Schlump went to Mons-en-P. at top speed to get more definite information. The days were short, and when he arrived at Occupation offices it was already night. He went in and reported. The corporal let him stand there for quite a while. Then he got up, spread his legs out, shoved his hands deep into his pockets, laughed, and said contemptuously, "Well, boy, you'll be going to the front, and when your mamma hears of it she'll be crying her snotty nose off."

Schlump was only seventeen, and the feeling of honor was still strong in him. It was as if some one had laid a filthy hand on what was most sacred to him. The same feeling came over him as on that day when he dashed the plateful of hot sauerkraut into the face of the cavalry man. Something red and black danced in front of his eyes, and he was gripped by indescribable rage: he flung his fist into the corporal's face, so that the man fell. What followed was not clear in his mind. He turned and ran. He heard a fierce shouting behind, chairs falling, a ringing and clattering like the clash of arms. He thought they had called out the guard. But he had already disappeared into the darkness. He ran and ran, down toward Deux Billes, not knowing whither to turn. He came by a lonely little house where he knew the people. He went in and greeted them as calmly as he could.

He sat down near the stove. The people were not surprised, for he had come in more than once to have a little chat with them.

"*Chauffez-vous, Monsieur,*" the woman said, and she shoved a chair toward him; then she gave him a cup of coffee and a piece of sugar. She apologized that she didn't have any cognac

for him, and then she began a plaint about the wretched war. Schlump listened with half an ear and answered abstractedly, for he was also listening to the night outside. Every moment the guard might turn up. And with every noise he caught, he shrank on himself and his heart beat heavily. And when he heard steps outside, he leapt up in terror from his chair, then mastered himself, sat down again, and talked wildly. Madame asked him in amazement what was the matter. He tried to smile and said, "Nothing." Then suddenly he no longer felt safe in this place; he said a hasty good-by, and Madame shook her head when he was gone, for he had interrupted her in the middle of a sentence and had fled.

Schlump listened in terror to hear if any one was coming; then he flew across the field to a clump of bushes. He hid behind them, holding the twigs together, and cowering on the ground, trying to collect his thoughts.

"Now you're a deserter," he said to himself. "And when they get you you'll be court-martialed for rebellion in the presence of the enemy. You get shot for that. And what about your father? And your mother? Think of the pain you're going to cause them." He saw them in the house; he saw them starting up in terror when the bell rang; they would be ashamed to face their neighbors, afraid of them. He made up the craziest plans to spare them this agony. He wanted to go and confess everything and beg them to have mercy and take into account the provocation. But then he saw those solid fellows sitting there and himself standing helpless in front of them, unable to get a word out. No: it couldn't be done.

But it was night now, and if he ran off he could travel a long way. He might be able to run away to Holland. Sure: but it was a march of several days to Holland, and he had no provisions: that would be the least of his worries: he had no pass, and he would be seized by the M.P.'s, because the alarm had surely been sent out everywhere. Wait! He could steal back into his own office and make out a pass for himself under another name, and stamp it a couple of times. Oh, but they'd

surely occupied the office by now, because that would be the first place where they would look for him.

He could think of nothing. And he cowered on the ground and the hours passed. He began to freeze and his teeth chattered.

He fell asleep, woke up, and fell asleep again. Between sleep and waking fantastic ideas pursued him.

A faint light was beginning to show in the east. Schlump set out on the road to Séclin. He kept a careful lookout on every side of him. Nothing to be seen. Everything was quiet. In the distance a dog bayed. In Séclin he had a friend, a telephone operator who had been detached from the recruits for service at the same time as himself. He would ask him whether a desertion had been reported.

Schlump sought out his friend's house—he was quartered with an old couple—and was informed that his friend had night duty till eight in the morning. That was a good break. Very carefully he stole over to the telephone post and woke up his friend, who was lying fast asleep on a bench. His friend knew of nothing. Then Schlump breathed easily. He suddenly became quite calm. "That corporal has something on his conscience," he thought. "I heard something about his not delivering the eggs and butter in the hospital. I know he sent supplies home and gave some to the sergeant who's in the game with him. And I also know he has a couple of women in Mons-en-P., and he gives them all sorts of things." Schlump remembered the time when the corporal asked him to look after some pigeons belonging to his women. "He's got something on his conscience and he didn't report me." But then it occurred to him that a lieutenant of Hussars had been sitting in the Occupation office—and him he didn't know. He had seen and heard everything. He surely wouldn't let the incident pass. He was an older man, and he had probably been attached to the office so that he could sign papers. But perhaps he was a decent sort of fellow. Schlump determined to wait till eight o'clock and then telephone the corporal. He knew

that at this moment the corporal would be alone in the office, and he also determined not to tell him where he was calling from.

A little after eight he called up.

"Listen," said the corporal, harshly. "You know what you've started and what you're up against."

Schlump kept quiet. The corporal continued:

"Because you're only a boy, I didn't want to report you. Report at once to the lieutenant who saw the thing happen. And then come to me and apologize."

A great joy welled up in Schlump. He knew that he had won.

He ran back, still cautiously, for he did not trust the corporal, and reported to the lieutenant. The latter was a sensible man. He made him sit down and put all sorts of questions to him: about his parents, his age, everything. Then he gave him a lecture, told him what his behavior meant and what the consequences could have been, and advised him to go to the corporal and offer his apologies. Schlump thanked him deeply and went over to the office. The moment he saw him the corporal flamed up. He roared at him, swore, cursed, called him an idiot, a criminal, a pick-pocket, a horse-thief, and every name current in the Germany army. During all this time Schlump stood stiffly at attention: till at last the corporal hissed at him, "Get out of this place!"

Schlump went home like a man who has been pardoned on the scaffold. He thought of his mother and breathed again.

SCHWEIK IN PRISON

FROM

"THE GOOD SOLDIER: SCHWEIK" BY JAROSLAV HASEK

(Translated by Paul Selver)

The last resort of people who were unwilling to go to the front was the detention barracks. I knew a schoolmaster who was not anxious to use his mathematical knowledge to assist the artillery in its shooting operations, and so he stole a watch from a lieutenant so as to get into the detention barracks. He did so with complete deliberation. The war did not impress or attract him. He considered it stark lunacy to fire at the enemy, and with shrapnel and shells to slaughter unfortunate teachers of mathematics, just like himself, on the other side, and so he calmly stole the watch.

They first investigated his state of mind, and when he said he had wanted to enrich himself, they despatched him to the detention barracks. There were quite a lot of people who served their time there for theft or fraud. Idealists and non-idealists. People who looked upon the army as a source of revenue, all those various quartermaster-sergeants at the base and at the front who committed all kinds of frauds with rations and pay, and also petty thieves who were a thousand times more honest than the persons who sent them there. Then too, the detention barracks contained those soldiers who had committed various other offences of a purely military character, such as insubordination, attempted mutiny, desertion. A special branch comprised the political prisoners, eighty per cent. of whom were quite innocent and ninety-nine per cent. of whom were condemned.

There was a magnificent legal staff, a mechanism such as is

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possessed by every state before its political, economic and moral collapse.

Every military unit contained Austria's hirelings who lodged information against the comrades who slept on the same mattresses with them and shared their bread with them on the march.

The police also supplied material to the detention barracks. The military censors of correspondence used to despatch there those who had written letters from the front to the ones whom they had left at home in distress. The gendarmes even handed over old retired farmers who sent letters to the front, and the court-martial rewarded them with twelve years' imprisonment for their words of comfort and the descriptions of the misery at home.

From the Hradcany detention barracks there was also a road which led by way of Brevnov to the exercise ground at Motol. In front went a man escorted by soldiers, with gyves on his hands, and behind him a cart containing a coffin. And on the exercise-ground at Motol a curt order, "*An! Feuer!*" And in all the regiments and battalions they read in the regimental orders that another man had been shot for mutiny.

In the detention barracks a trinity, comprising Staff-Warder Slavik, Captain Linhart and Sergeant-Major Repa, nicknamed "the hangman," were already carrying out their duties, and nobody knows how many they beat to death in solitary confinement. On receiving Schweik, Staff-Warder Slavik cast at him a glance of mute reproach, as much as to say:

"So your reputation's damaged, is it? Is that why you've joined us? Well, my lad, we'll make your stay here a happy one, the same as we do to all who fall into our hands."

And in order to lend emphasis to this figure of speech, he thrust a muscular and beefy fist under Schweik's nose, saying:

"Sniff at that, you damned swab."

Schweik sniffed and remarked:

"I shouldn't like a bash in the nose with that; it smells of graveyards."

This calm, thoughtful remark rather pleased the staff-warder.

"Ha," he said, prodding Schweik in the stomach, "stand up straight. What's that you've got in your pockets? If it's cigarettes, you can leave 'em here. And hand over your money so's they can't steal it. Is that all you've got? Now then, no nonsense. Don't tell any lies or you'll get it in the neck."

"Where are we to put him?" inquired Sergeant-Major Repa.

"We'll shove him in Number 16," decided the staff-warder, "among the ones in their underclothes. Can't you see that Captain Linhart's marked his papers, *Streng behüten, beobachten?* Oh, yes," he remarked solemnly to Schweik, "riffraff have got to be treated like riffraff. If anybody raises Cain, why, off he goes into solitary confinement and once he's there we smash all his ribs and leave him till he pops off. We're entitled to do that. What did we do with that butcher, Repa?"

"Oh, he gave us a lot of trouble, sir," replied Sergeant-Major Repa, dreamily. "He was a tough 'un and no mistake. I must have been trampling on him for more than five minutes before his ribs began to crack and blood came out of his mouth. And he lived for another ten days after that. Oh, he was a regular terror."

"So you see, you swab, how we manage things here when anyone starts any nonsense or tries to do a bunk," Staff-Warder Slavik concluded his pedagogical discourse. "Why, it's practically suicide and that's punished just the same here. And God help you, you scabby ape you, if you take it into your head to complain of anything at inspection time. When there's an inspection on, and they ask you if there are any complaints, you've got to stand at attention, you stinking brute, salute and answer, 'I beg to report, sir, no complaints, and I'm quite satisfied.' Now, you packet of muck, repeat what I said."

"Beg to report, sir, no complaints and I'm quite satisfied," repeated Schweik with such a charming expression on his face that the staff-warder was misled and took it for a sign of frankness and honesty.

"Now take everything off except your underclothes and go to Number 16," he said in quite civil tones, without adding such phrases as damned swab, packet of muck, or stinking brute, as he usually did.

In Number 16 Schweik encountered twenty men in their underclothing. They were the ones whose papers were marked: "*Streng behüten, beobachten!*", and who were now being looked after very carefully to prevent them from escaping.

If their underclothing had been clean and if there had been no bars on the windows, you might have supposed at a first glance that you were in the dressing room of some bathing establishment.

Sergeant-Major Repa handed Schweik over to the "cell-manager," a hairy fellow in an unbuttoned shirt. He inscribed Schweik's name on a piece of paper hanging on the wall, and said to him:

"To-morrow there's a show on. We're going to be taken to chapel to hear a sermon. All of us chaps in underclothes, we have to stand just under the pulpit. It won't half make you laugh."

As in all prisons and penitentiaries, the chapel was in high favour among the inmates of the detention barracks. They were not concerned about the possibility that the enforced attendance at chapel might bring them nearer to God, or that they might become better informed about morality. No such nonsense as that entered their heads. What the divine service and the sermon did offer was a pleasant distraction from the boredom of the detention barracks. They were not concerned about being nearer to God, but about the hope of discovering the stump of a discarded cigar or cigarette on their way along the corridors and across the courtyard. God was thrust completely into the background by a small fag-end drifting about hopelessly in a spittoon or somewhere on the dusty floor. This tiny reeking object triumphed over God and the salvation of the soul.

And then too, the sermon itself, what a treat, what fun.

Otto Katz, the chaplain, was such a jolly fellow. His sermons were so very attractive and droll, so refreshing amid the boredom of the detention barracks. He could prate so entertainingly about the infinite grace of God, and uplift the vile captives, the men without honour. He could hurl such delightful terms of abuse from the pulpit. He could bellow his "*Ita missa est*" so gorgeously from the altar, officiate with such utter originality, playing ducks and drakes with Holy Mass. When he was well in his cups, he could devise entirely new prayers, a liturgy of his own which had never existed before.

Oh, and it was too funny for words when he sometimes slipped and fell over with the chalice, the holy sacrament or the missal in his hand, whereupon he would loudly accuse the ministrant from the gang of convicts of having deliberately tripped him up, and would there and then hand out a dose of solitary confinement or a spell in irons. And the recipient thoroughly enjoyed it, for it was all part of the frolics in the prison chapel.

Otto, the most perfect of military chaplains, was a Jew. He had a very chequered past. He had studied in a business college, and there he acquired a familiarity with bills of exchange and the law appertaining to them which enabled him within a year to steer the firm of Katz & Company into such a glorious and successful bankruptcy that old Mr. Katz departed to North America, after arranging a settlement with his creditors, unbeknown to them and unbeknown also to his partner, who proceeded to the Argentine.

So when young Otto Katz had disinterestedly bestowed the firm of Katz & Company upon North and South America, he was in the position of a man who has no where to lay his head. He therefore joined the army.

Before this, however, he did an exceedingly noble thing. He had himself baptized. He applied to Christ for help in his career. He applied to him absolutely confident that he was striking a business bargain with the Son of God. He successfully qualified for a commission, and Otto Katz, the new-

fledged Christian, remained in the army. At first he thought he was going to make splendid progress, but one day he got drunk and took Holy Orders.

He never prepared his sermons, and everybody looked forward to hearing them. It was a solemn moment when the occupants of Number 16 were led in their underclothes into chapel. Some of them, upon whom fortune had smiled, were chewing the cigarette-ends which they had found on the way to chapel, because, being without pockets, they had nowhere to keep them. Around them stood the rest of the prisoners and they gazed with relish at the twenty men in underclothing beneath the pulpit, into which the chaplain now climbed, clanking his spurs.

"*Habt Acht!*" he shouted, "let us pray, and now all together after me. And you at the back there, you hog, don't blow your nose in your hand. You're in the Temple of the Lord, and you'll be for it, mark my words. You haven't forgotten the Lord's Prayer yet, have you, you bandits? Well, let's have a shot at it. Ah, I knew it wouldn't come off. Lord's Prayer, indeed; two cuts from the joint with veg., have a regular blow-out, with a snooze to follow, pick your noses and be hanged to the Lord God, that's more in your line, isn't it?"

He stared down from the pulpit at the twenty bright angels in underclothing, who, like all the rest, were thoroughly enjoying themselves. At the back they were playing put and take.

"This it a bit of all right," whispered Schweik to his neighbour, who was suspected of having, for three crowns, chopped off all his comrade's fingers with an axe, to get him out of the army.

"You wait a bit," was the answer. "He's properly oiled again to-day. He's going to jaw about the thorny path of sin."

True enough, the chaplain was in an excellent mood that day. Without knowing why he was doing it, he kept leaning over the side of the pulpit and was within an ace of losing his balance.

"I'm in favour of shooting the lot of you. You pack of

rotters," he continued. "You won't turn to Christ and you prefer to tread the thorny path of sin."

"I told you it was coming. He's properly oiled," whispered Schweik's neighbour gleefully.

"The thorny path of sin, you thick-headed louts, is the path of struggle against vice. You are prodigal sons, who prefer to loll about in solitary confinement than return to your Father. But fix your gaze further and upward unto the heights of heaven, you lousy crew. I'd be glad if that man would stop snorting at the back there. He's not a horse and he's not in a stable—he's in the Temple of the Lord. Let me draw your attention to that, my beloved hearers. Now then, where was I? *Ja, über den Seelenfrieden, sehr gut.* Bear in mind, you brutes, that you are human beings and that you must see through a glass darkly into distant space and know that all lasts here only for a time, but God abideth for evermore. *Sehr gut, nicht wahr, meine Herren?* I ought to pray for you day and night, asking merciful God, you brainless louts, to pour out His soul into your cold hearts and wash away your sins with His holy mercy, that you may be His for evermore and that he may love you always, you thugs. But that's where you're mistaken. I'm not going to lead you into paradise." The chaplain hiccupped. "I won't lift a finger for you," he continued obstinately. "I wouldn't dream of such a thing, because you are incorrigible blackguards. The goodness of the Lord will not guide you upon your ways, the spirit of God's love will not pervade you, because the Lord wouldn't dream of worrying his head about such a gang of rotters. Do you hear me, you down there, yes, you in your underclothes?"

The twenty men in underclothes looked up and said, as with one voice:

"Beg to report, sir, we hear you."

"It's not enough just to hear," the chaplain continued his sermon, "dark is the cloud of life in which the smile of God will not remove your woe, you brainless louts, for God's goodness likewise has its limits, and you hog over there, don't you

belch, or I'll have you put away till you're black in the face. And you down there, don't run away with the idea that you're in a tap-room. God is most merciful, but only to decent people and not to the scum of the earth who don't follow His rules and regulations. That's what I wanted to tell you. You don't know how to say your prayers, and you think you go to chapel to have some fun, as if it was a music hall or a cinema. And I'm going to knock the idea out of your heads that I'm here to amuse you and give you a good time. I'll shove each and every one of you into solitary confinement, that's what I'll do, you blackguards. Here am I wasting my time with you, and I can see it's all no use. Why, if the field marshal himself was here, or the archbishop, you wouldn't care a damn. You wouldn't turn to God. All the same, one of these days you'll remember me and then you'll realize that I was trying to do you good."

Among the twenty in underclothes a sob was heard. It was Schweik who had burst into tears.

The chaplain looked down. There stood Schweik wiping his eyes with his fist. Around him were signs of gleeful appreciation.

The chaplain, pointing to Schweik, went on:

"Let each of you take an example from this man. What is he doing? He's crying. Don't cry, I tell you, don't cry. You want to become a better man. That's not such an easy job, my lad. You're crying now, but when you get back to your cell, you'll be just as big a blackguard as you were before. You'll have to ponder a lot more on the infinite grace and mercy of God; you'll have to make a great effort before your sinful soul is likely to find the right path in this world upon which it should proceed. To-day with our own eyes we see a man here moved to tears in his desire for a change of heart, and what are the rest of you doing? Nothing at all. There's a man chewing something as if his parents had brought him up to chew the cud and another fellow over there is searching his shirt for fleas, and in the Temple of the Lord, too. Can't you do all your scratching at home? Must you leave it till you're at Divine

Service, of all places? And you're very slack about everything, too, Staff-Warder Slavik. You're all soldiers and not a pack of damn silly civilians. So you ought to behave in a soldierly manner, even though you are in church. Damn it all, get busy seeking God, and look for fleas at home. That's all I've got to say, you loafers, and I want you to behave properly at Mass, and not like the last time when some fellows at the back were swapping government linen for grub."

The chaplain descended from the pulpit and entered the sacristy, followed by the staff-warder. After a while the staff-warder made his appearance, came straight up to Schweik, removed him from the bevy of men in underclothes and led him away into the sacristy.

The chaplain was sitting very much at his ease on a table, rolling a cigarette.

When Schweik entered, he said:

"Yes, you're the man I want. I've been thinking it over and I rather fancy I've seen through you, my lad. Do you get me? That's the first time anyone's ever shed tears here as long as I've been in this church."

He jumped down from the table and shaking Schweik by the shoulder, he shouted beneath a large, dismal picture of St. Francis of Sales:

"Now then, you blackguard, own up that you were only shamming."

And the effigy of St. Francis of Sales gazed interrogatively at Schweik. On the other side, from another picture, another martyr, whose posterior was just being sawn through by Roman soldiers, gazed distractedly at him.

"Beg to report, sir," said Schweik with great solemnity, staking everything on one card, "that I confess to God Almighty and to you, Reverend Father, that I was shamming. I saw that what your sermon needed was the reformed sinner whom you was vainly seeking. So I really wanted to do you a good turn and let you see there's still a few honest people left, besides having a bit of a lark to cheer myself up."

The chaplain looked searchingly at Schweik's artless countenance. A sunbeam frisked across the dismal picture of St. Francis of Sales and imparted a touch of warmth to the distracted martyr on the wall opposite.

"Here, I'm beginning to like you," said the chaplain, returning to his seat on the table, "what regiment do you belong to?" He began to hiccough.

"Beg to report, sir, I belong to the 91st regiment and yet I don't, if you follow me. To tell the honest truth, sir, I don't properly know how I stand."

"And what are you here for?" inquired the chaplain, continuing to hiccough.

From the chapel could be heard the strains of a harmonium which took the place of an organ. The musician, a teacher imprisoned for desertion, was making the harmonium wail the most mournful hymn tunes. These strains blended with the hiccoughing of the chaplain to form a new Doric mode.

"Beg to report, sir, I really don't know why I'm here and why I don't complain about it. It's just my bad luck. I always look at everything in a good light, and then I always get the worst of it, like that martyr there in the picture."

The chaplain looked at the picture, smiled and said:

"Yes, I really like you, I must ask the Provost Marshal about you, but I can't stop here talking any longer now. I've got to get that Holy Mass off my chest. *Kehrt euch!* Dismiss!"

When Schweik was back again among his fellow-worshippers in underclothes beneath the pulpit, they asked him what the chaplain had wanted him in the sacristy for, whereupon he replied very crisply and briefly:

"He's tight."

The chaplain's new performance, the Holy Mass, was followed by all with great attention and unconcealed approval. There was one man beneath the pulpit who laid a wager that the monstrence would fall out of the chaplain's hand. He wagered all his bread rations against two punches in the eye and he won his bet.

What filled the minds of all in chapel at the sight of the chaplain's ceremonials was not the mysticism of believers or the piety of the faithful. It was the same feeling that we have in a theatre when we are about to see a new play, the plot of which we do not know. Complications ensue and we eagerly wait to see how they will be disentangled.

With aesthetic gusto the congregation feasted their eyes upon the vestments which the chaplain had donned inside out and with a fervid appreciation they watched everything that was being done at the altar.

The red-haired ministrant, a deserter from the 28th regiment and a specialist in petty theft, was making an honest endeavour to extract from his memory the whole routine and technique of the Holy Mass. He acted not only as ministrant, but also as prompter to the chaplain, who with absolute aplomb mixed up whole sentences and blundered into the service for Advent, which, to everybody's delight, he began to sing. As he had no voice and no musical ear, the roof of the chapel began to re-echo with a squealing and grunting like a pigsty.

"He's well oiled to-day," those in front of the altar were saying with complete satisfaction and relish. "He isn't half canned. He's been out on the booze with the girls and no mistake."

And now for about the third time the chaplain could be heard chanting "*Ita missa est*" from the altar, like the war cry of Red Indians. It made the windows rattle. He then looked into the chalice once more to see whether any wine was left, whereupon with a gesture of annoyance he turned to his hearers:

"Well, now you can go home, you blackguards, that's the lot. I have noticed that you do not show the sort of piety you should, when you're in church before the countenance of the Holy of Holies, you worthless loafers. Face to face with God Almighty, you make no bones about laughing, coughing and sniggering, shuffling with your feet, even in my presence, although I here represent the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ and

God the Father, you thickheaded louts. If that occurs again, I'll make things as hot for you as you deserve, and you'll discover that the hell I preached to you about not so long ago isn't the only one, but that there's a hell upon earth, and even if you save yourselves from the first one, I'll see you aren't saved from the other. *Abtreten!*"

The chaplain departed to the sacristy, changed his clothes, poured some sacramental wine from a demijohn into a tankard, drank it up, and with the help of the red-headed ministrant mounted his horse which was tied up in the courtyard. But then he suddenly remembered Schweik, dismounted and went to the provost marshal's office.

Bernis, the provost-marshal, was a man about town, an accomplished dancer and a thorough-paced bounder. His work bored him terribly. He was always losing documents containing particulars of charges, and so he had to invent new ones. He tried deserters for theft and thieves for desertion. He devised the most varied forms of hocus-pocus to convict men of crimes they had never dreamt of. He trumped up cases of lese majesty, and the imaginary incriminating evidence which he thus produced, he always assigned to somebody, the charge or evidence against whom had got lost in the inextricable muddle of official papers.

"Hallo!" said the chaplain, shaking hands, "how goes it?"

"Rotten," replied Bernis, "they've got my papers into a mess and now it's the devil's own job to make head or tail of them. Yesterday I sent upstairs all the evidence against some chap who was charged with mutiny, and now they've sent it back because, according to them, he's not charged with mutiny, but with pinching jam."

Bernis spat with disgust.

"What about a game of cards?" asked the chaplain.

"I've blued every bean I had at cards. A day or two ago we were playing poker with that bald-headed colonel and he cleaned me right out. On the other hand, I've picked up a tasty bit of skirt. And what about your Holiness?"

"I need an orderly," said the chaplain. "I used to have an old chap, an accountant, but he was a smug brute. He kept on snuffling and praying to God to spare him, so I sent him off to the front. I've since heard that his particular crowd got cut to pieces. After that they sent me another fellow, but all he did was to go out boozing and charging it up on my account. He was a decent sort but he had sweaty feet, so I shoved him on a draft, too. Now to-day I've just discovered a chap who started crying just to rag me. That's the kind of fellow I want. His name's Schweik and he's in Number 16. I'd like to know what he's there for and whether I couldn't wangle him out of it."

Bernis started looking for the documents relating to Schweik but, as usual, he could find nothing.

"Captain Linhart's got it, I expect," he said, after a long search. "God knows how all these papers manage to get lost here. I must have sent them to Linhart. I'll telephone to him at once. Hallo, Lieutenant Bernis speaking, sir. I say, do you happen to have any documents relating to a man called Schweik? . . . Schweik's papers must be in my hands? That's odd . . . I took them over from you? Most odd. He's in Number 16 . . . I know, sir, I've got the records of Number 16. But I thought that Schweik's papers might be kicking around somewhere in your office. . . . Pardon? I'm not to talk to you like that? Things don't kick around in your office? Hallo, hallo. . . ."

Bernis sat down at his table and heatedly expressed his disapproval of the careless way in which investigations were carried out. He and Captain Linhart had been on bad terms for some time past, and in this they had been thoroughly consistent. If Bernis received a file belonging to Linhart, he stowed it away, the result being that nobody could ever get to the bottom of anything. Linhart did the same with the files belonging to Bernis. Also, they lost each other's enclosures.

(Schweik's documents were found among the court-martial records only after the end of the war. They had been placed in a file relating to someone named Josef Koudela. On the

envelope was a small cross and beneath it the remark "Settled," together with the date.)

"Well, Schweik's file has got lost," said Bernis. "I'll have him sent for, and if he doesn't own up to anything, I'll let him go and arrange for him to be transferred to your care. Then you can settle his hash when he's joined his unit."

After the chaplain had gone, Bernis had Schweik brought in, but left him standing by the door, because he had just received a telephone message from police headquarters that the receipt of requisite material for charge No. 7267, concerning Private Maixner, had been acknowledged in Office No. 1 under Captain Linhart's signature.

Meanwhile, Schweik inspected the provost-marshal's office.

The impression which it produced could scarcely be called a favourable one, especially with regard to the photographs on the walls. They were photographs of the various executions carried out by the army in Galicia and Serbia. Artistic photographs of cottages which had been burned down and of trees, the branches of which were burdened with hanging bodies. There was one particularly fine photograph from Serbia showing a whole family which had been hanged. A small boy with his father and mother. Two soldiers with bayonets were guarding the tree on which the execution had been carried out, and an officer was standing victoriously in the foreground smoking a cigarette. On the other side of the picture, in the background, could be seen a field kitchen at work.

"Well, what's the trouble with you, Schweik?" asked Bernis, putting the slip of paper with the telephone message away into a file, "what have you been up to? Would you like to admit your guilt, or wait until the charge is brought against you? We can't go on for ever like this. Don't imagine you're going to be tried in a law court by a lot of damn fool civilians. A court-martial is what you'll be up against—a k. u. k. *Militärgericht*. The only way you can possibly save yourself from a severe but just sentence is to admit your guilt."

Bernis adopted a peculiar method when he had lost the

charge papers against the accused. He considered himself so perspicacious that, although he was not in possession of the written evidence against a man and, indeed, even if he did not know what he was charged with, he could tell why he had been brought to the detention barracks, merely by observing his demeanour. His perspicacity and knowledge of men were so great that on one occasion a gypsy, who had been sent from his regiment to the detention barracks for stealing shirts, was charged by him with political offences, to wit, he had discussed with some soldiers in a taproom somewhere or other the establishment of an independent national state, composed of the territories of the crowns of Bohemia and Slovakia, with a Slav king to rule over them.

"We have documents," he said to the unfortunate gypsy. "The only thing left for you to do is to admit your guilt, to tell us where you said it and to what regiment the soldiers belonged who heard you and when it was."

The unfortunate gypsy invented date, place and regiment of his alleged audience.

"So you won't admit anything?" said Bernis, when Schweik remained as silent as the grave. "You won't say why you're here? You might at least tell me before I tell you. Once more I urge you to admit your guilt. It'll be better for you because it'll make the proceedings easier and you'll get off with a lighter sentence."

"Beg to report, sir," said Schweik's good-humoured voice, "I've been brought here as a foundling."

"How do you mean?"

"Beg to report, sir, I can explain it to you as easy as pie. In our street there's a watch maker and he had a little boy of two. Well, one day this little boy went off for a walk by himself and got lost and a policeman found him sitting on the pavement. He took the little chap to the police station and there they locked him up. You see, though this little fellow was quite innocent, he got locked up all the same. And even if he'd been able to speak and he'd been asked why he was locked up,

he wouldn't have known. And I'm in the same boat as he was. I'm a foundling, too."

The provost-marshal's keen glance scrutinized Schweik's face and figure, but he was baffled by them. Such unconcern and innocence radiated from the personality standing before him that he began to pace furiously to and fro in his office, and if he had not promised the chaplain to send Schweik to him, Heaven alone knows how Schweik would have fared.

At last he came to a standstill by his table.

"Now just you listen," he said to Schweik, who was staring unconcernedly into vacancy. "If you cross my path again, I'll give you something to remember me by. Take him away."

When Schweik had been taken back to Number 16, Bernis sent for Staff-Warder Slavik.

"Schweik is to be sent to Mr. Katz pending any further decision about him," he said curtly. "Just see that the discharge papers are made out and then have Schweik escorted to Mr. Katz by two men."

"Is he to be put in irons for the journey, sir?"

The provost-marshal banged his fist on the table.

"You're a damned fool. Didn't I tell you plainly to have the discharge papers made out?"

And all the bad temper which Bernis had been accumulating during the day as a result of his dealings with Captain Linhart and Schweik was now vented like a cataract upon the head of the staff-warder and concluded with the words:

"You're the biggest bloody fool I've ever come across."

This upset the staff-warder and on his way back from the provost-marshal's office, he relieved his feelings by kicking the prisoner on fatigue duty who was sweeping the passage.

As for Schweik, the staff-warder thought he might as well spend at least one night in the detention barracks and have a little more enjoyment, too.

The night spent in the detention barracks will always be one of Schweik's fondest memories.

Next door to Number 16 was a cell for solitary confinement, a murky den from which issued, during that night, the wailing of a soldier who was locked up in it and whose ribs were being broken by Sergeant-Major Repa, at the orders of Staff-Warder Slavik, for some disciplinary offence.

When the wailing stopped, there could be heard in Number 16 the crunching noise made by the fleas as they were caught between the fingers of the prisoners.

Above the door in an aperture in the wall an oil lamp, provided with wire netting to protect it, gave a faint light and much smoke. The smell of the oil blended with the natural effluvia of unwashed bodies and with the stench from the bucket.

In the corridors could be heard the measured tread of the sentries. From time to time the aperture in the door opened and through the peep-hole the turnkey looked in.

At eight o'clock in the morning Schweik was ordered to go to the office.

"On the left-hand side of the door leading into the office there's a spittoon and they throw fag-ends into it," one man informed Schweik. "And on the first floor you'll pass another one. They don't sweep the passages till nine, so you're sure to find something."

But Schweik disappointed their hopes. He did not return to Number 16. The nineteen men in their underclothes wondered what could have happened to him and made all sorts of wild guesses.

A freckled soldier belonging to the defence corps whose imagination was extremely lively, declared that Schweik had tried to shoot an officer and that he was being taken off that day to the exercise ground at Motol for execution.

SAMBA DIOUF'S JOURNEY

FROM

"THE LONG WALK OF SAMBA DIOUF" BY JEROME
AND JEAN THARAUD

(Translated by Willis Steel)

"Today, the Alamans are going to find out how much stronger the lion is than the bull!"

So spake Samba Sarr, third in rank in the 7th company of the 113th battalion of Senegalese sharpshooters one rainy morning as the company left the camp at Courneau in the Arcachon forest to march to battle with the Toubabs.

"You speak truth," responded Samba Diouf, marching by his side, "but the rain spoils our departure."

The company had been two hours in crossing the pine woods and in that time the rain had not ceased, wetting their sacks, their blanket rolls, their bags and other equipment, to which was added the "coupe-coupe," the long spear, without which none of the black race would have thought that he was armed at all.

Mud collected on their enormous shoes in masses. These foot coverings, turned up at the toes, seemed to be designed to carry it, for the Intendant, warned that the feet of the Africans were abnormally large, had had made for them enormous shoes, without stopping to think that if the habit of walking in bare feet had spread the sole that was no reason for thinking it had increased the size of the foot itself. So the battalion, in its march, carried along great heaps of watery soil.

"In truth," repeated Samba, after a moment of silence, "this rain spoils our departure. But God favors the Toubabs by

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giving them rainfall in all the seasons while he sends it to us only in the season of winter."

No voice echoed this remark of the fisherman, each man cowered under the downfall, keeping his thoughts to himself, if he had any. What was heard was the crash of kettle against bayonet, the oath of some sergeant trying to keep the alignment or scolding a laggard, the squishing of mud under their soles and the soft, silken hiss of the obstinate rain filling up every rut and sunken place.

Five months of their life the Blacks had left behind them in the camp of instruction at Courneau, which was enclosed on every side by a barrier of maritime pine trees, five months of learning how to march, how to count, how to use a gun and in acquiring a few words of French, in order to comprehend the orders of their officers and to understand each other, for they were of many races and of many tongues. There were Bambaras from the valley of the Niger and from upper Senegal, proud of having formerly broken away from the yoke of their masters, the Toucouleurs, in order to aid the Toubabs in their conquest of the Levant, and these were recognizable by the three scars on their cheeks. And there were the Ouolofs, blacker than all the other Blacks, who also boasted that they had known the Toubabs longest and who, from the confines of Mauretania to the red hills of Poppinguinea, from Yang-Yang to Dakar, and from N'Diorbal to Saint-Louis, overran the interior and by their braggings as by their starched boubous claimed to be the most pretentious of the black race. Followed the Mandinguese, who are farmers as well as warriors, peopling under various names the immense district from the Niger to Saloum and from Bafoulabea to Guinea, composing as late as yesterday under their king, Samoury Touré, a great empire against which in turn had fought Joffre, Archinard, Gallieni, Combes and Gouraud. The Sérères came next with protruding cheekbones, meagre limbs, muscular and exceptionally vigorous bodies, quick to take offense, good workers but drunkards, expert horsemen and good shots, perhaps the only Blacks of

Africa who would as soon kill for a deception in love as for an affair of honor.

The Toucouleurs were marked according to their caste by little stars on the forehead and cheeks; they were very adroit in the chase, either of an elephant or a bird, and they have not forgotten the time when their king, Amadeus Laminé, put all his neighbors to the sword. Other tribes were of the Soninkes, the Khassonkes with split nose and guttural speech, the Sous-sous, the Timnes of Guinea, farmers and sailors, and the Rufisques, adroit in the management of the pirogue, and the race of the Fouladou who had put off their high white turbans, truncated and bordered with many colored silks, and wore instead the iron casque.

Others were there who had come from Mossi and Massina, where the cities are so vast that it is easy to be lost in them, where the dwellings have terraced roofs, doors of wood and where the horses are many hands high and fleet as the wind. The gold hunters of Falema marched after these; these men wash the sands of the rivers and dwell at the bottom of deep pits which give their country the appearance of an immense skimmer. The Floups followed, a race degenerated from their fear of Genie and the practice of magic, whose chief thought during their entire life is to fatten the bull which is to be sacrificed at the funeral ceremonies for their dead.

Out of the shadow of their forests had come the Baoules; they live there in the company of great apes, and their voices are like the barking of dogs which guard at night the entrance to their huts. The Gouros and the Abbeyes, who live among the rocks and bury their dead near their huts under heaps of piled up stones to discourage the appetite of their neighbors for man-flesh, were marching in front of the Manos from lofty Sassandra, who never admit strangers to their territory, and next came the natives of far-away Kidougou, who are indifferent to sun and rain and wear nothing but a bamboo hollowed out and held by a cord passed around the loins and whose women for their garment use only a leafy branch to

protect them from mosquitoes. Then came the Bobos, indigenous to the plains of the Soudan between the Black River and the Red River and they, more indifferent still to the changes of seasons, wear nothing at all.

Many other tribes there were marching along of whom it was impossible to say whence they came, what were their customs, or what language they spoke, for they belonged to the debris of races of which there may be left but one village lost amid the marshes, or in a clearing deep in the forest. All of them, people of the North and people of the South, from Senegal and from the Niger, from the interior and from the coasts—Bambaras, Ouolofs, Mandinguese, Toucouleurs, Sérères, Soninkes, Khassonkes, Soussous, Timnes, Lebous, races of Massina and of Falema, Floups, Gouros, Abbeyes, and those also whose race and country were unknown, all these Blacks who to eyes not used to seeing them looked enough alike to be brothers, nevertheless in Africa are separated by great distances of land and water, separated still more by differences of religion, of language, of manners, of customs, and of habits, all these Blacks for whom any little difference was a reason for hostility . . . all of them marched along this morning, elbow to elbow, obedient to the will of the Toubabs!

* * * * *

For two days and a night the smoke machine bore the black battalion from city to city and from plain to plain.

"Truly," said they, "this France is immense!"

To which others replied: "Do you believe that we are still in France?"

"The world is wide!" said the camel driver. "And if I rode my camel all the way that the Toubabs have made me follow he would last only one season!"

"I heard the Toubab officers talk among themselves," announced Lamine Cissé, "they say that tomorrow at the first cock crow we shall arrive at the place where the war is."

"Only let us arrive there and make war quickly!" said the

whole squadron. "He who is to die will die, but those who escape will see again their own country. . . ."

* * * * *

The morning of the third day, after stops without number on railway tracks and on sidings lost in the plain, on one of those cold humid dawns, well known to all who have bivouacked in the valley of the Meuse, the 113th black battalion, stiff with the cold and long hours of immobility, descended from the carriages with its equipment and drew up on the platform in the same order as when they started. Far off they heard dull blows at intervals, which cut brutally into the icy air, like the noise of a sabar in the nearby village.

Samba Diouf made this reflection.

"Yes," replied Lamine Cissé, "but what we hear is the sabar (drum) of war!"

Some sub-officers at the station, wearing their kepi with its white ribbon on their ear, walked past the rank, staring curiously at the sharpshooters behind their stacked arms.

"Where is the war, Mossie Sarzent?" Samba Diouf asked one of them.

"Never you mind!" replied the Frenchman, laughing, "it isn't your onion patch, *mon vieux!*"

Astonished by these words whose sense was hidden from him, Samba turned to the pupil of Monsignor Jalabert:

"What did he say, Capolar?"

"I do not know," replied Lamine Cissé, "but I believe he meant that you were not going that way."

"Truly," cried Diouf, "the Toubabs disturb my spirit! They bring us here to make war and they will not tell us where the war is. But it must be that we are near it, since they have taken me on my long walk and brought me so far away!"

For a month the 113th battalion, Senegalese, camped in the Argonne Wood, breaking stone for a road several kilometres from the front. This monotonous occupation was little to the taste of the Blacks, who are not used to routine in their work.

and never could understand why they had to do this while their guns and their "coupe-coupe" hung useless under the tents and in the wooden barracks. Every little while they would stop work to exchange reflections on the passing troops, on the interminable file of camion automobiles, on the multitude of horses, their power and their height.

"If their horses are so big, how immense must be their elephants!" they would say.

"In order to feed all these men and horses, the king of the Toubabs ought to have plenty of money!"

"But where is the king of the Toubabs? We have never seen him!"

Lamine Cissé had an answer to this question which completely satisfied the curiosity of the squadron:

"The king of the Toubabs is at Paris."

Whenever the drone of an aeroplane was heard in the sky every head was lifted, every eye sought to discover the imperceptible point whence the noise escaped, and on perceiving it they gave expression to their surprise in childish laughter. With mouths wide-stretched they followed the winged thing and the tiny clouds of smoke which formed around it.

"I tell you," said one, "he can see the camp at Courneau!"

"What an ox you are!" another declared, "I tell you he can see as far as Dakar!"

"If the bird-man keeps on mounting higher," several said with a homesick accent, "he will surely be able to see our village!"

Then slowly, under the order of a corporal or a sergeant, they went back to their task, but continued to exchange opinions which never altered:

"I do not know if God will give the Toubabs power in the other life, but certainly he has made them powerful on this earth!"

"You say truly, God has given the Toubabs three ways of possessing the earth: to have, to know and to be able. No

secret of the universe is unknown to them except one—the way to make a nose.”

The reason they said this is that among them the nose is life, since by means of it they breathe.

* * * * *

When day was over they went back to camp at night after their soup, if a moon was shining they organized dances in this clearing of the Argonne precisely as they used to do in their African forests. One race would dance and immediately all the other races would form a circle around them to watch and applaud. Sometimes the dancers were the Soudanese, who, to the accompaniment of the flute or the tambour, or even to that of an iron pot beaten by a spoon, would execute a warlike dance. With naked sabre in hand, cutting the air with sweeping blows, or feigning to carve their adversary they would mimic a duel to the death, crouching, retreating, advancing again, falling flat on the earth only to bound up suddenly, all the time making terrible thrusts with the sword.

They would keep this up until they had beaten to earth an imaginary enemy and they would sink back exhausted while the cries of the assembly spurred them on and rewarded them so long as the flute, piercing the night with its sharp notes, excited the spectators. And frequently the camp kettle was completely defaced by the redoubtable blows of the frantic musician.

After the sabre dance others would throw their guns into the air, catch them again, twist them and turn them with prodigious rapidity, meantime uttering guttural cries until urged to new exertions by the music and the applause of the spectators they would exaggerate their contortionist feats and toss their rifles higher and higher.

The Oulofs, however, gave themselves up to lascivious dances, twisting their hips and thighs, turning the backs of their hands to heaven and striking the ground with their heels to the accelerated noise of the tam-tam. The Toucouleurs, accompanying themselves with their single string violin, sang

and danced homesick strophes about Penda or Denané or some other beautiful girl of their country:

She is like an antelope when she walks
In the plain in the morning,
Yes, like an antelope is Denané
When she walks in the plain,
In the morning. . . .

Meanwhile the other Toucouleurs sustained the song in a half-voice, dwelling on the last note of each verse with a long mournful murmur.

The savage Baoules balanced themselves in a line or in a circle, their hands on one another's shoulders, and gripping the earth like elephants. The men of Fouladou mimicked the dance of the handkerchief or the drawers with gestures there are no words to describe.

All these dances, as various as the races of which the battalion was composed, had the same effect on everybody, awakening in their hearts a vague regret for their far away country and these memories weighed on their spirits, lengthening the tasks they were set to accomplish and causing them to regard as farther and farther away the furious thing which they had never seen but which they called war.

* * * * *

So one morning they left Saint Pierre wood, and when night fell the Ouolofs, Bambaras, Toucouleurs, Sérères, Mandingue, Foulahs, Soninkis, Gouros, Baoules, Yakoubas, men from North and South Africa, entered in single file the passages which conducted to the trenches.

Proud, as always, the Ouolofs balanced their equipment on their broad shoulders, wishing to appear indifferent to the thunder of cannon which shook the earth, as well as to the fearful shells which criss-crossed the twilight. The Bambaras, also, carried their heads high, to show that the white man's

way of making war was nothing new for them. The Toucouleurs uttered obscene reproaches for the "sons of three sous," who had dug the path so steep and narrow, and against the sons of still less who moved so fast at the head of the battalion that to follow they had to run, as if it was reasonable to run to meet one's fate!

With a heavy step the Mandinguese pursued the way in silence, taking care where they set their feet, and thinking of the means to get out of this adventure as creditably as possible. The Foulahs, dry-throated, drew courage from the canteen, reflecting vaguely that the panther and the buffalo which they had hunted in the tall grass were less to be feared than these Toubabs, who without even looking sent messengers of death into space.

The Sérères, who had filled up with wine during the long halt, went ahead without consciousness, half intoxicated, but still with a sure foot, for used to drinking palm wine and eau-de-vie made from millet, they could carry their alcohol marvelously. With eyes widened by fright, the men of the South dared not lift their heads lest they should draw down on them fire from heaven; they hurried along with heads bent, shoulders narrowed, between two walls of earth, in this terrific night where they thought a battle of evil Spirits was going on.

Mid way the route three shells burst over the branch. The terrified Gouros, thinking they were already dead, threw themselves flat on the ground. It was necessary to prick them with bayonets from behind to make them stir. Even then the Gouros would not get up on their feet, preferring, they said, to have the entire battalion march over their bodies. The column was checked, amidst cries and arguments. Finally, non-commissioned officers pushed the Gouros into a refuge and the battalion took up the march again past the trembling company, who were vomiting from excess of fear. The blacks of other tribes said: "These men have no shame; they dirty the skin of the Blacks!"

The march lasted three hours, before the battalion arrived at the trenches they were to occupy. Company by company, squad by squad, the African sharpshooters disappeared in the gloom.

Lamine Cissé counted his men: nobody was missing, all were there.

"What do you think now of this war?" cried the Mandingue huckster, out of the obscurity.

"It amazes me," replied the Peuhl shepherd.

"The Toubabs have led us to the gates of Hell!" declared the pirogue builder.

"This is worse than all they have told us!" said the elephant hunter.

As the camel driver started up a passage which led out of the trench, his corporal warned:

"Don't go there! You could leave your nose there."

"I would rather lose my life," replied Samba Sarr, "than not to know what is hidden from me."

He gripped the ladder and stumbled up by the earthen steps which led out of the trench, and raising his head above the parapet looked for a long time over the naked land which lay before him under a night sky, aglare at intervals with bursting shells and bombs. Then he turned back to his companions.

"Well, Samba Sarr, what did you see?"

"In truth, nothing," said he. "Trees without branches, fire that leaps in the sky, noise which deafens."

He was coming down the ladder when a noise of feet and voices made them all listen.

"What is it now, Samba Sarr?"

"Nothing," said the camel driver again, throwing a look behind him, "it is the Toubabs who are passing, and I think they carry a dead man."

"He was one who did not miss a chance," said some one, "I tell you he will not be cold any more!"

"Have pity for his mother!" said another.

The elephant hunter added:

"Eh! boys, you have run away from the cold, but I know that I can say you are soon going to be hot enough here!"

"What is bad does not endure," said the crocodile hunter.
"What we have to do let us do it quickly, so that they will send us back home again!"

THE LADY IN GREEN

FROM

"CIVILIZATION" BY GEORGES DUHAMEL

I can hardly say why I liked Rabot.

Every morning, going and coming in the room about my duties, I perceived Rabot, or rather Rabot's head and, less plainly, Rabot's eye, concealing itself among the tumbled bed-clothes. He had a little the air of a guinea-pig hiding under its straw and watching you anxiously.

Each time, in passing, I made Rabot a familiar sign that consisted in energetically closing my left eye and pursing my lips. At once Rabot's eye closed, digging a thousand wrinkles in that withered invalid's face of his, and that was all: we had exchanged our salutations and our confidences.

Rabot never laughed. He had been brought up as a charity child and one surmised that he had never had enough milk when he was little; you never make up for it if those early meals have been too scanty.

Rabot was red-headed, with a sallow complexion bespattered with freckles. His head was so small that he resembled at once a rabbit and a bird. When any stranger addressed a word to him, his lower lip began to tremble and his chin rumbled up like a walnut. We had to explain to him at first that no one was going to strike him.

Poor Rabot! I don't know what I would have given to see him laugh! As it was, everything conspired to make him weep. He had fearful, interminable dressings, repeated every day for months; he was compelled to remain motionless, which prevented him from playing with his comrades; and then, besides,

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he didn't know how to play anything and wasn't very much interested in anything.

I was, I think, the only one to reach any sort of intimacy with him; and, as I have said, this consisted mainly of winking my left eye whenever I passed within reach of his bed.

Rabot did not smoke. Whenever the cigarettes were distributed, he took his share and played with them a moment, moving his big, thin fingers which had lost their shape from lying in bed. The fingers of a sick laborer are not beautiful; when they have lost their hardness and robustness they no longer look like anything at all.

I believe that Rabot would have liked to offer his good cigarettes to his neighbors; but it's so difficult to speak, above all to give somebody something. So the cigarettes became covered with dust on the little board, and Rabot remained stretched out on his back, quite thin and straight, like a straw swept away by the torrent of the war, not understanding anything of what was going on.

One day an officer of the general staff entered the ward and approached Rabot.

"Is it this one here?" he said. "Good! I've come to bring him the military medal and the war-cross."

He gave Rabot a little paper to sign and left him face to face with the trinkets. Rabot did not smile. He placed the box in front of him on the coverlet and gazed at it from nine o'clock in the morning till three in the afternoon.

At three o'clock the officer came back and said:

"I was mistaken; there has been an error. They were not for Rabot, these decorations, they were for Raboux."

Then he took back the medal-case, tore up the receipt, and went on.

Rabot wept from three o'clock in the afternoon till nine in the evening, the hour at which he settled down for sleep. The next day he began to weep again, the first thing in the morning. M. Gassin, who is a good chief, went off to the General Staff

and came back with a medal and a cross exactly like the others; he even gave Rabot a new paper to sign.

Rabot stopped crying. A shadow remained on his face, however—a shadow that betrayed a lack of confidence, as if he feared that one day or another they would come and take his trinkets away from him again.

Several weeks went by. I often glanced at Rabot's face, and I tried to imagine what a smile would make it look like. I hoped in vain; it was evident that Rabot did not know how to smile, that his face wasn't made for such things.

It was then that the lady in green appeared.

She entered one fine morning, by one of the doors, like anybody else. But she wasn't like anybody else: she had the air of an angel, a queen, a doll. She was not dressed like the nurses who worked in the wards, nor like the mothers and the wives who came to visit their sons or their husbands when they were wounded. She didn't even look like one of the ladies one meets in the street. She was much more beautiful, much more majestic. She made me think rather of those fairies, those splendid images you see on great colored calendars, beneath which the artist has written, "Reverie," or "Melancholy," or, more often, "Poetry."

She was surrounded by handsome, well-dressed officers, who seemed very attentive to her least words and were showering upon her the liveliest signs of admiration.

"Come in, Madame," one of them said to her, "since you wish to see some of the wounded."

She took two steps into the ward, stopped suddenly, and said in a deep voice, "The poor fellows!"

Every one in the ward pricked up his ears and opened his eyes. Mery laid down his pipe; Tarrissant shifted his crutches, with him a sign of emotion; Domenge and Burnier stopped playing cards and glued their hands against their stomachs lest any one should see them inadvertently. Poupot did not move, because he is paralyzed; but one could see plainly that he was listening with all his might.

The lady in green walked first up to Sorri, the negro.

"Your name is Sorri?" she said, consulting the label.

The black man nodded his head. The lady in green continued, in a tone as sweet and melodious as that of the ladies who play in the theater:

"You have come to fight in France, Sorri, and you have left behind your beautiful land, the cool, fragrant oasis in the fiery desert of sand. Ah! Sorri! How beautiful are those African evenings when the young women appear along the palm-tree walk, like somber statues, bearing on their heads aromatic pitchers filled with honey and the milk of the cocoa."

The officers emitted a charmed murmur, and Sorri, who understands French, uttered, as he wagged his head, the word, "Cocoa . . . cocoa."

Then the lady in green glided on over the pavement. She came to Rabot and perched calmly at the foot of his bed, like a swallow on a telegraph-wire.

"Rabot," she said, "you are a brave man!"

Rabot did not reply, but in his usual fashion, he shut his eyes tight, like a child who is afraid he is going to be slapped.

"Ah, Rabot!" said the lady in green, "what recognition ought we not to give you, you men who preserve unimpaired for us our sweet France! But, Rabot, you know already the greatest recompense of all: Glory! The rapturous ardor of combat! The exquisite anguish of bounding forward with bayonet glittering in the sun; the voluptuous delight of plunging the avenging steel in the bleeding flank of the enemy; and then the suffering, divine because it is endured for all; the holy wound which of a hero makes a god! Ah! what beautiful memories, Rabot!"

The lady in green was still, and a religious silence reigned in the ward.

And then occurred something altogether unexpected. Rabot ceased to resemble himself. All his features drew together, violently agitated in a manner that was almost tragic. A hoarse

voice issued in jerks from his skeleton-like chest, and all the world could see that Rabot was laughing.

He laughed for more than three-quarters of an hour. The lady in green had long since left and Rabot was still laughing, by fits, as if he were coughing his last cough, as if he were in the throes of death.

After that it was as if something had changed in Rabot's life. When he was on the point of weeping and felt pain, one could always make him forget it and extort a little smile from him by saying in time: "Rabot! They're going to send for the lady in green."

IN THE HOSPITAL

FROM

"ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT" BY ERICH
MARIA REMARQUE

(Translated by A. W. Wheen)

The oldest man in our room is Lewandowski. He is forty, and has already lain ten months in the hospital with a severe abdominal wound. Just in the last few weeks he has improved sufficiently to be able to hobble about doubled up. For some days past he has been in great excitement. His wife has written to him from the little home in Poland where she lives, telling him that she has saved up enough money to pay for the fare, and is coming to see him.

She is already on the way and may arrive any day. Lewandowski has lost his appetite, he even gives away red cabbage and sausage after he has had a couple of mouthfuls. He goes round the room perpetually with the letter. Everyone has already read it a dozen times, the post-marks have been examined heaven knows how often, the address is hardly legible any longer for spots of grease and thumbmarks, and in the end what is sure to happen, happens: Lewandowski develops a fever, and has to go back to bed.

He has not seen his wife for two years. In the meantime she has given birth to a child, whom she is bringing with her. But something else occupies Lewandowski's thoughts. He had hoped to get permission to go out when his old woman came; for obviously seeing is all very well, but when a man gets his wife again after such a long time, if at all possible, a man wants something else besides.

Lewandowski has discussed it all with us at great length; in the army there are no secrets about such things. And what's

more, nobody finds anything objectionable in it. Those of us who are already able to go out have told him of a couple of very good spots in the town, parks and squares, where he would not be disturbed; one of us even knows of a little room.

But what is the use, there Lewandowski lies in bed with his troubles. Life holds no more joy for him if he has to forego this affair. We console him and promise to get over the difficulty somehow or other.

One afternoon his wife appears, a tousled little thing with anxious, quick eyes like a bird, in a sort of black, crinkly mantilla with ribbons; heaven knows where she inherited the thing.

She murmurs something softly and stands shyly in the doorway. It terrifies her that there are six of us men present.

"Well, Marja," says Lewandowski, and gulps dangerously with his Adam's apple, "you can come in all right, they won't hurt you."

She goes the round and proffers each of us her hand. Then she produces the child, which in the interval has done something in its napkin. From a large handbag embroidered with pearls she takes out a clean one and makes the child fresh and presentable. This dispels her first embarrassment, and the two begin to talk.

Lewandowski is very fidgety, every now and then he squints across at us most unhappily with his round goggle eyes.

The time is favourable, the doctor's visit is over, at the most there couldn't be more than one sister left in the ward. So one of us goes out to prospect. He comes back and nods.

"Not a soul to be seen. Now's your chance, Johann, set to."

The two speak together in an undertone. The woman turns a little red and looks embarrassed. We grin good-naturedly and make pooh-poohing gestures, what does it matter! The devil take all the conventions, they were made for other times; here lies the carpenter Johann Lewandowski, a soldier shot to a cripple, and there is his wife; who knows when he will see her again? He wants to have her, and he should have her, good.

Two men stand at the door to forestall the sisters and keep them occupied if they chance to come along. They agree to stand guard for a quarter of an hour or thereabouts.

Lewandowski can only lie on his side, so one of us props a couple of pillows against his back. Albert gets the child to hold, we all turn round a bit, the black mantilla disappears under the bed-clothes, we make a great clatter and play skat noisily.

All goes well. I hold a club solo with four jacks which nearly goes the round. In the process we almost forget Lewandowski. After a while the child begins to squall, although Albert, in desperation, rocks it to and fro. Then there is a bit of creaking and rustling, and as we look up casually we see that the child has the bottle in its mouth, and is back again with its mother. The business is over.

We now feel ourselves like one big family, the woman is rather quieter, and Lewandowski lies there sweating and beaming.

He unpacks the embroidered handbag, and a couple of good sausages comes to light; Lewandowski takes up the knife with a flourish and saws the meat into slices.

With a handsome gesture he waves toward us—and the little woman goes from one to the other and smiles at us and hands round the sausage; she now looks quite handsome. We call her Mother, she is pleased and shakes up our pillows for us.

A GROUP OF PORTRAITS

FROM

"THE ENORMOUS ROOM" BY E. E. CUMMINGS

In the preceding pages I have described my Pilgrim's Progress from the Slough of Despond, commonly known as Section Sanitaire Vingt-et-Un (then located at Germaine) through the mysteries of Noyon, Gré and Paris to the Porte de Triage de La Ferté Macé, Orne. With the end of my first day as a certified inhabitant of the latter institution a definite progression is brought to a close. Beginning with my second day at La Ferté a new period opens. This period extends to the moment of my departure and includes the discovery of The Delectable Mountains, two of which—The Wanderer and I shall not say the other—have already been sighted. It is like a vast grey box in which are laid helter-skelter a great many toys, each of which is itself completely significant apart from the always unchanging temporal dimension which merely contains it along with the rest. I make this point clear for the benefit of any of my readers who have not had the distinguished privilege of being in jail. To those who have been in jail my meaning is at once apparent; particularly if they have had the highly enlightening experience of being in jail with a perfectly indefinite sentence. How, in such a case, could events occur and be remembered otherwise than as individualists distinct from Time Itself? Or, since one day and the next are the same to such a prisoner, where does Time come in at all? Obviously, once the prisoner is habituated to his environment, once he accepts the fact that speculation as to when he will regain his liberty cannot possibly shorten the hours of his incarceration and may very well drive him into a state of unhappiness (not

to say morbidity), events can no longer succeed each other: whatever happens, while it may happen in connection with some other perfectly distinct happenings, does not happen in a scale of temporal priorities—each happening is self-sufficient, irrespective of minutes, months and the other treasures of freedom.

It is for this reason that I do not purpose to inflict upon the reader a diary of my alternative aliveness and non-existence at La Ferté—not because such a diary would unutterably bore him, but because the diary or time method is a technique which cannot possibly do justice to timelessness. I shall (on the contrary) lift from their grey box at random certain (to me) more or less astonishing toys; which may or may not please the reader, but whose colours and shapes and textures are a part of that actual Present—without future and past—whereof they alone are cognizant who—so to speak—have submitted to an amputation of the world.

I have already stated that La Ferté was a Porte de Triage—that is to say, a place where suspects of all varieties were herded by *le gouvernement français* preparatory to their being judged as to their guilt by a Commission. If the Commission found that they were wicked persons or dangerous persons, or undesirable persons, or puzzling persons, or persons in some way insusceptible of analysis, they were sent from La Ferté to a “regular” prison, called Précigne, in the province of Sarthe. About Précigne the most awful rumors were spread. It was whispered that it had a huge moat about it, with an infinity of barbed wire fences thirty feet high, and lights trained on the walls all night to discourage the escape of prisoners. Once in Précigne you were “in” for good and all, *pour la durée de la guerre*, which *durée* was a subject of occasional and dismal speculation—occasional for reasons, as I have mentioned, of mental health; dismal for unreasons of diet, privation, filth, and other trifles. La Ferté was, then, a stepping stone either to freedom or to Précigne. But the excellent and inimitable and altogether benignant French government was

not satisfied with its own generosity in presenting one merely with Précigne—beyond that lurked a *cauchemar* called by the singularly poetic name: Isle de Groix. A man who went to Isle de Groix was done.

As the Surveillant said to us all, leaning out of a littlish window, and to me personally upon occasion ——

“You are not prisoners. Oh, no. No indeed, I should say not. Prisoners are not treated like this. You are lucky.”

I had *de la chance* all right, but that was something which the *pauvre* M. Surveillant wot altogether not of. As for my fellow-prisoners, I am sorry to say that he was—it seems to my humble personality—quite wrong. For who was eligible to La Ferté? Anyone whom the police could find in the lovely country of France (a) who was not guilty of treason (b) who could not prove that he was not guilty of treason. By treason I refer to any little annoying habits of independent thought or action which *en temps de guerre* are put in a hole and covered over, with the somewhat naïve idea that from their cadavers violets will grow, whereof the perfume will delight all good men and true and make such worthy citizens forget their sorrows. Fort Leavenworth, for instance, emanates even now a perfume which is utterly delightful to certain Americans. Just how many La Fertés France boasted (and for all I know may still boast) God Himself knows. At least, in that Republic, amnesty has been proclaimed, or so I hear.—But to return to the Surveillant’s remark.

J’avais de la chance. Because I am by profession a painter and a writer. Whereas my very good friends, all of them deeply suspicious characters, most of them traitors, without exception lucky to have the use of their cervical vertebrae, etc., etc., could (with a few exceptions) write not a word and read not a word; neither could they *faire la photographie* as Monsieur Auguste chucklingly called it (at which I blushed with pleasure): worst of all, the majority of these dark criminals who had been caught in nefarious plots against the honour of France were totally unable to speak French. Curious thing.

Often I pondered the unutterable and inextinguishable wisdom of the police, who—undeterred by facts which would have deceived less astute intelligences into thinking that these men were either too stupid or too simple to be connoisseurs of the art of betrayal—swooped upon their helpless prey with that indescribable courage which is the prerogative of policemen the world over, and bundled it into the La Fertés of that mighty nation upon some, at least, of whose public buildings it seems to me that I remember reading:

Liberté.

Egalité.

Fraternité.

And I wondered that France should have a use for Monsieur Auguste, who had been arrested (because he was a Russian) when his fellow munition workers struck and whose wife wanted him in Paris because she was hungry and because their child was getting to look queer and white. Monsieur Auguste, that desperate ruffian exactly five feet tall who—when he could not keep from crying (one must think about one's wife or even one's child once or twice, I merely presume, if one loves them—*"et ma femme est très gen-tille, elle est fran-çaise et très belle, très, très, belle, vraiment; elle n'est pas comme moi, un pet-it homme laide, ma femme est grande et belle, elle sait bien lire et é-crire, vraiment; et notre fils . . . vous dev-ez voir notre pet-it fils. . ."*)—used to start up and cry out, taking B. by one arm and me by the other,

"Allons, mes amis! Chan-tons 'Quackquackquack.'"

Whereupon we would join in the following song, which Monsieur Auguste had taught us with great care, and whose renditions gave him unspeakable delight:

"Un canard, déployant chez elle

(Quackquackquack)

Il disait à sa canard fidèle

(Quackquackquack)

Il disait (Quackquackquack)

Il faisait (Quackquackquack)
Quand" (spelling mine)
"finirons nos desseins,

Quack.

Quack.

Quack.

*Qua-
ck."*

I suppose I will always puzzle over the ecstasies of That Wonderful Duck. And how Monsieur Auguste, the merest gnome of a man, would bend backwards in absolute laughter at this song's spirited conclusion upon a note so low as to wither us all.

Then, too, the Schoolmaster.

A little fragile old man. His trousers were terrifically too big for him. When he walked (in an insecure and frightened way) his trousers did the most preposterous wrinkles. If he leaned against a tree in the *cour*, with a very old and also fragile pipe in his pocket—the stem (which looked enormous in contrast to the owner) protruding therefrom—his three-sizes too big collar would leap out so as to make his wizened neck appear no thicker than the white necktie which flowed upon his two-sizes too big shirt. He always wore a coat which reached below his knees, which coat, with which knees, perhaps some one had once given him. It had huge shoulders which sprouted, like wings, on either side of his elbows when he sat in The Enormous Room quietly writing at a tiny three-legged table, a very big pen walking away with his weak bony hand. His too big cap had a little button on top which looked like the head of a nail; and suggested that this old doll had once lost its poor grey head and had been repaired by means of tacking its head upon its neck, where it should be and properly belonged. Of what hideous crime was this being suspected? By some mistake he had three mustaches, two of them being eyebrows. He used to teach school in Alsace-Lorraine, and his sister is there. In speaking to you his kind face is peacefully

reduced to triangles. And his tie buttons on every morning with a Bang! And off he goes; led about by his celluloid collar, gently worried about himself, delicately worried about the world. At eating time he looks sidelong as he stuffs soup into stiff lips. There are two holes where cheeks might have been. Lessons hide in his wrinkles. Bells ding in the oldness of eyes. Did he, by any chance, tell the children that there are such monstrous things as peace and good will . . . a corrupter of youth, no doubt . . . he is altogether incapable of anger, wholly timid and tintinabulous. And he had always wanted so much to know—if there were wild horses in America?

Yes, probably the Schoolmaster was a notorious seditionist. The all-wise French government has its ways, which like the ways of God are wonderful.

I had almost forgot The Bear—number two, not to be confused with the seeker of cigarette-ends. A big, shaggy person, a farmer, talked about "*mon petit jardin*," an anarchist, wrote practically all the time (to the gentle annoyance of The Schoolmaster) at the queer-legged table; wrote letters (which he read aloud with evident satisfaction to himself) addressing "*my confrères*," stimulating them to even greater efforts, telling them that the time was ripe, that the world consisted of brothers, etc. I liked The Bear. He had a sincerity which, if somewhat startlingly uncouth, was always definitely compelling. His French itself was both uncouth and startling. I hardly think he was a dangerous bear. Had I been the French government I should have let him go berrying, as a bear must and should, to his heart's content. Perhaps I liked him best for his great awkward way of presenting an idea—he scooped it out of its environment with a hearty paw in a way which would have delighted any one save *le gouvernement français*. He had, I think,

VIVE LA LIBERTÉ

tattooed in blue and green on his big hairy chest. A fine bear. A bear whom no twitchings at his muzzle nor any starvation

nor yet any beating could ever teach to dance . . . but then, I am partial to bears. Of course none of this bear's letters ever got posted—Le Directeur was not that sort of person; nor did this bear ever expect that they would go elsewhere than into the official waste-basket of La Ferté, which means that he wrote because he liked to; which again means that he was essentially an artist—for which reason I liked him more than a little. He lumbered off one day—I hope to his brier-patch, and to his children and to his *confrères*, and to all things excellent and livable and highly desirable to a bruin.

The Young Russian and The Barber escaped while I was enjoying my little visit at Orne. The former was an immensely tall and very strong boy of nineteen or under; who had come to our society by way of solitary confinement, bread and water for months, and other reminders that to err is human, etc. Unlike Harree, whom, if anything, he exceeded in strength, he was very quiet. Everyone let him alone. I "caught water" in the town with him several times and found him an excellent companion. He taught me the Russian numerals up to ten, and was very kind to my struggles over 10 and 9. He picked up the cannon-ball one day and threw it so hard that the wall separating the men's *cour* from the *cour des femmes* shook, and a piece of stone fell off. At which the cannon-ball was taken away from us (to the grief of its daily wielders, Harree and Fritz) by four perspiring *plantons*, who almost died in the performance of their highly patriotic duty. His friend, The Barber, had a little shelf in The Enormous Room, all tricked out with an astonishing array of bottles, atomizers, tonics, powders, scissors, razors and other deadly implements. It has always been a *mystère* to me that our captors permitted this array of obviously dangerous weapons when we were searched almost weekly for knives. Had I not been in the habit of using B.'s safety razor I should probably have become better acquainted with The Barber. It was not his price, nor yet his technique, but the fear of contamination which made me avoid these instruments of hygiene. Not that I shaved to excess. On the

contrary, the Surveillant often, nay bi-weekly (so soon as I began drawing certain francs from Norton Harjes) reasoned with me upon the subject of appearance; saying that I was come of a good family, and I had enjoyed (unlike my companions) an education, and that I should keep myself neat and clean and be a shining example to the filthy and ignorant—adding slyly that the “hospital” would be an awfully nice place for me and my friend to live, and that there we could be by ourselves like gentlemen and have our meals served in the room, avoiding the *salle à manger*; moreover, the food would be what we liked, delicious food, especially cooked . . . all (quoth the Surveillant with the itching palm of a Grand Central Porter awaiting his tip) for a mere trifle or so, which if I liked I could pay him on the spot—whereat I scornfully smiled, being inhibited by a somewhat selfish regard for my own welfare from kicking him through the window. To The Barber’s credit be it said: he never once solicited my trade, although the Surveillant’s “*Soi-même*” (oneself) lectures (as B. and I referred to them) were the delight of our numerous friends and must, through them, have reached his alert ears. He was a good-looking quiet man of perhaps thirty, with razor-keen eyes—and that’s about all I know of him except that one day The Young Russian and The Barber, instead of passing from the *cour* directly to the building, made use of a little door in an angle between the stone wall and the kitchen; and that to such good effect that we never saw them again. Nor were the ever-watchful guardians of our safety, the lion-hearted *plantons*, aware of what had occurred until several hours after; despite the fact that a ten-foot wall had been scaled, some lesser obstructions vanquished, and a run in the open made almost (one unpatriotically-minded might be tempted to say) before their very eyes. But then—who knows? May not the French Government deliberately have allowed them to escape, after—through its incomparable spy system—learning that The Barber and his young friend were about to attempt the life of the Surveillant with an atomizer brim-full

of T.N.T.? Nothing could after all be more highly probable. As a matter of fact a couple of extra-fine razors (presented by the Soi-même-minded Surveillant to the wily coiffeur in the interests of public health) as well as a knife which belonged to the kitchen and had been lent to The Barber for the purpose of peeling potatoes—he having complained that the extraordinary safety-device with which, on alternate days, we were ordinarily furnished for that purpose, was an insult to himself and his profession—vanished into the rather thick air of Orne along with the Barber *lui même*. I remember him perfectly in The Enormous Room, cutting apples deliberately with his knife and sharing them with the Young Russian. The night of the escape—in order to keep up our morale—we were helpfully told that both refugees had been snitched e'er they had got well without the limits of the town, and been remanded to a punishment consisting among other things, in *travaux forcés à perpétuité*—verbum sapientibus, he that hath ears, etc. Also a nightly inspection was instituted; consisting of our being counted thrice by a *planton*, who then divided the total by three and vanished.

Soi-même reminds me of a pleasant spirit who graced our little company with a good deal of wit and elegance. He was called by B. and myself, after a somewhat exciting incident which I must not describe, but rather outline, by the agreeable title of *Même le Balayeur*. Only a few days after my arrival the incident in question happened. It seems (I was in *la cour* promenading for the afternoon) that certain more virile inhabitants of The Enormous Room, among them Harree and Pom Pom *bien entendu*, declined to *se promener* and kept their habitat. Now this was in fulfilment of a little understanding with three or more girls—such as Celina, Lily and Renee—who, having also declined the promenade, managed in the course of the afternoon to escape from their quarters on the second floor, rush down the hall and upstairs, and gain that landing on which was the only and well-locked door to The Enormous Room. The next act of this little comedy (or trag-

edy, as it proved for the participants, who got *cabinot* and *pain sec*—male and female alike—for numerous days thereafter) might well be entitled “Love will find a way.” Just how the door was opened, the lock picked, etc., from the inside is (of course) a considerable mystery to anyone possessing a limited acquaintance with the art of burglary. Anyway it was accomplished, and that in several fifths of a second. Now let the curtain fall, and the reader be satisfied with the significant word “Asbestos,” which is part of all first-rate performances.

The Surveillant, I fear, distrusted his *balayeur*. *Balayeurs* were always being changed because *balayeurs* were (in shameful contrast to the *plantons*) invariably human beings. For this deplorable reason they inevitably carried notes to and fro between *les hommes* and *les femmes*. Upon which ground the *balayeur* in this case—a well-knit keen-eyed agile man, with a sense of humor and sharp perception of men, women and things in particular and in general—was called before the bar of an impromptu court, held by M. le Surveillant in The Enormous Room after the promenade. I shall not enter in detail into the nature of the charges pressed in certain cases, but confine myself to quoting the close of a peroration which would have done Demosthenes credit:

“*Même le balayeur a tiré un coup!*”

The individual in question mildly deprecated M. le Surveillant's opinion, while the audience roared and rocked with laughter of a somewhat ferocious sort. I have rarely seen the Surveillant so pleased with himself as after producing this bon mot. Only fear of his superior, the ogre-like Directeur, kept him from letting off entirely all concerned in what after all (from the European point of view) was an essentially human proceeding. As nobody could prove anything about *Même*, he was not locked up in a dungeon; but he lost his job of sweeper—which was quite as bad, I am sure, from his point of view—and from that day became a common inhabitant of The Enormous Room like any of the rest of us.

His successor, Garibaldi, was a corker.

How the Almighty French government in its Almighty Wisdom ever found Garibaldi a place among us is more than I understand or ever will. He was a little tot in a faded blue-gray French uniform; and when he perspired he pushed a *kepi* up and back from his worried forehead which a lock of heavy hair threateningly overhung. As I recollect Garibaldi's terribly difficult, not to say complicated, lineage, his English mother had presented him to his Italian father in the country of France. However this trilogy may be, he had served at various times in the Italian, French and English armies. As there was (unless we call Garibaldi Italian, which he obviously was not) nary a subject of King Ponzi or Carruso or whatever be his name residing at La Ferté Macé, Garibaldi was in the habit of expressing himself—chiefly at the card table, be it said—in a curious language which might have been mistaken for French. To B. and me he spoke an equally curious language, but a perfectly recognizable one, i.e., Cockney Whitechapel English. He showed us a perfectly authentic mission-card which certified that his family had received a pittance from some charitable organization situated in the Whitechapel neighborhood, and that, moreover, they were in the habit of receiving this pittance; and that, finally, their claim to such pittance was amply justified by the poverty of their circumstances. Beyond this valuable certificate, Garibaldi (which everyone called him) attained great incoherence. He had been wronged. He was always being misunderstood. His life had been a series of mysterious tribulations. I for one have the merest idea that Garibaldi was arrested for the theft of some peculiarly worthless trifle, and sent to the Limbo of La Ferté as a penance. This merest idea is suggested by something which happened when the Clever Man instituted a search for his missing knife—but I must introduce the Clever Man to my reader before describing that rather beguiling incident.

Conceive a tall, well-dressed, rather athletic, carefully kept, clean and neat, intelligent, not for a moment despondent, altogether superior man, fairly young (perhaps twenty-nine) and

quite bald. He wins enough every night at Banque to enable him to pay the less fortunate to perform his *corvée d'eau* for him. As a consequence he takes his vile coffee in bed every morning, then smokes a cigarette or two lazily, then drops off for a nap, and gets up about the middle of the morning promenade. Upon arising he strops a razor of his own (nobody knows how he gets away with a regular razor), carefully lathers his face and neck—while gazing into a rather classy mirror which hangs night and day over his head, above a little shelf on which he displays at such times a complete toilet outfit—and proceeds to annihilate the inconsiderable growth of beard which his mirror reveals to him. Having completed the annihilation, he performs the most extensive ablutions per one of the three or four pails which The Enormous Room boasts, which pail is by common consent dedicated to his personal and exclusive use. All this time he has been singing loudly and musically the following sumptuously imaginative ditty:

“mEEt me tonIght in DREAmLand,
UNDER the SIL-v’ry mOOn,
meet me in DREAmLand,
sweet dreamy DREAmLand —
there all my DRE-ams come trUE.”

His English accent is excellent. He pronounces his native language, which is the language of the Hollanders, crisply and firmly. He is not given to Gotverdummering. In addition to Dutch and English he speaks French clearly and Belgian distinctly. I daresay he knows half a dozen languages in all. He gives me the impression of a man who would never be at a loss, in whatever circumstances he might find himself. A man capable of extricating himself from the most difficult situation; and that with the greatest ease. A man who bides his time; and improves the present by separating, one after one, his monied fellow-prisoners from their bank-notes. He is, by all odds, the coolest player that I ever watched. Nothing

worries him. If he loses two-hundred francs tonight, I am sure he will win it and fifty in addition tomorrow. He accepts opponents without distinction—the stupid, the wily, the vain, the cautious, the desperate, the hopeless. He has not the slightest pity, not the least fear. In one of my numerous notebooks I have this perfectly direct paragraph:

Card table: 4 stares play banque with 2 cigarettes (1 dead) & A pipe the clashing faces yanked by a leanness of one candle bottle-stuck (Birth of X) (where sits The Clever Man who pyramids, sings (mornings) "Meet Me . . .")

which specimen of telegraphic technique, being interpreted, means: Judas, Garibaldi, and The Holland Skipper (whom the reader will meet *de suite*)—Garibaldi's cigarette having gone out, so greatly is he absorbed—play *banque* with four intent and highly focussed individuals who may or may not be The Schoolmaster, Monsieur Auguste, The Barber, and Môme; with The Clever Man (as nearly always) acting as banker. The candle by whose somewhat uncorpulent illumination the various physiognomies are yanked into a ferocious unity is stuck into the mouth of a bottle. The lighting of the whole, the rhythmic disposition of the figures, construct a sensuous integration suggestive of The Birth of Christ by one of the Old Masters. The Clever Man, having had his usual morning warble, is extremely quiet. He will win, he pyramids—and he pyramids because he has the cash and can afford to make every play a big one. All he needs is the rake of a *croupier* to complete his disinterested and wholly nerveless poise. He is a born gambler, is The Clever Man—and I dare say that to play cards in time of war constituted a heinous crime and I am certain that he played cards before he arrived at La Ferté; moreover, I suppose that to win at cards in time of war is an unutterable crime, and I know that he has won at cards before in his life—so now we have a perfectly good and valid explanation

of the presence of The Clever Man in our midst. The Clever Man's chief opponent was Judas. It was a real pleasure to us whenever of an evening Judas sweated and mopped and sweated and lost more and more and was finally cleaned out.

But The Skipper, I learned from certain prisoners who escorted the baggage of The Clever Man from The Enormous Room when he left us one day (as he did for some reason, to enjoy the benefits of freedom), paid the mastermind of the card table 150 francs at the gate—poor Skipper! upon whose vacant bed lay down luxuriously the Lobster, immediately to be wheeled fiercely all around The Enormous Room by the Guard Champêtre and Judas, to the boisterous plaudits of *tout le monde*—but I started to tell about the afternoon when the master-mind lost his knife; and tell it I will forthwith. B. and I were lying prone upon our respective beds when—presto, a storm arose at the further end of The Enormous Room. We looked, and beheld The Clever Man, thoroughly and efficiently angry, addressing, threatening and frightening generally a constantly increasing group of fellow-prisoners. After dismissing with a few sharp linguistic cracks of the whip certain theories which seemed to be advanced by the bolder auditors with a view to palliating, persuading and tranquilizing his just wrath, he made for the nearest *paillasse*, turned it topsy-turvy, slit it neatly and suddenly from stem to stem with a jack-knife, banged the hay about, and then went with careful haste through the pitifully minute baggage of the *paillasse's* owner. Silence fell. No one, least of all the owner, said anything. From this bed The Clever Man turned to the next, treated it in the same fashion, searched it thoroughly, and made for the third. His motions were those of a perfectly oiled machine. He proceeded up the length of the room, varying his procedure only by sparing an occasional mattress, throwing *paillasses* about, tumbling *sacs* and boxes inside out; his face somewhat paler than usual but otherwise immaculate and expressionless. B. and I waited with some interest to see what would happen to our belongings. Arriving at our beds he

paused, seemed to consider a moment, then, not touching our *paillasses* proper, proceeded to open our duffle bags and hunt half-heartedly, remarking that "somebody might have put it in;" and so passed on. "What in hell is the matter with that guy?" I asked of Fritz, who stood near us with a careless air, some scorn and considerable amusement in his eyes. "The bloody fool's lost his knife," was Fritz's answer. After completing his rounds The Clever Man searched almost everyone except ourselves and Fritz, and absolutely subsided on his own *paillasse* muttering occasionally "if he found it" what he'd do. I think he never did find it. It was a "beautiful" knife, John the Baigneur said. "What did it look like?" I demanded with some curiosity. "It had a naked woman on the handle," Fritz said, his eyes sharp with amusement.

And everyone agreed that it was a great pity that The Clever Man had lost it, and everyone began timidly to restore order and put his personal belongings back in place and say nothing at all. . . .

PART VIII
THE END OF IT ALL

THE END OF IT ALL

8

CHRISTMAS

FROM

"POEMS AND PLAYS" BY PERCY MACKAYE

*Now is the midnight of the nations: dark
Even as death, beside her blood-dark seas,
Earth, like a mother, in birth agonies,
Screams in her travail, and the planets hark
Her million-throated terror. Naked, stark,
Her torso writhes enormous, and her knees
Shudder against the shadowed Pleiades,
Wrenching the night's imponderable arc.*

*Christ! What shall be delivered in the morn
Out of these pangs, if ever indeed another
Morn shall succeed this night, or this vast mother
Survive to know the blood-spent offspring, torn
From her wracked flesh? What splendor from the smother?
What new winged world, or what mangled God, still-born?*

THE BATTLE OF THE GENERALS

FROM

"THE CASE OF SERGEANT GRISCHA" BY ARNOLD ZWEIG

(Translated by Eric Sutton)

General Schieffenzahn rose from the table, and with a smile at the white-haired civilian opposite him, remarked:

"It's a pity, Herr van Ryjlte, that you're not a German: I should immediately put you under open arrest. What cigars! What coffee! You're corrupting our Spartan habits!"

The grey-haired Dutchman, with his ruddy, placid countenance, answered with equal courtesy:

"If I were a German, I should be patriotic enough to consider it a privilege to let you shut me up."

And they both laughed. The three officers of the Operations Division—this conversation was taking place at Brest-Litovsk—were delighted with the old gentleman's retort. They knew that Schieffenzahn's good-humour meant that he was full of bright ideas and things would go smoothly. Dr. van Ryjlte, who was more than seventy years old, sat calmly in his chair. He was waiting for the above-mentioned coffee which he had brought with him—fine strong Java coffee;—and he and his hosts each lit one of the offending cylindrical imports which he had also brought. He smiled peacefully as he looked round at the company, cracking walnuts in his bony hands, and did not betray his deep disappointment. He was a Delegate of the Red Cross who had been sent to Germany to inspect certain camps in which deported Belgian men and women had been interned, and to see their grievances redressed; he had also come to warn the great Schieffenzahn quite frankly about America. He could not get over the General's icy unbelief, his impenetrability to new ideas. "America's all bluff and hum-

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bug: they're getting above themselves." That was all he could get out of him; and indeed this was what the yellow press had incessantly dinned into its millions of readers, and the General and his grocer both believed it.

Nevertheless he had approached his task with care, and to avoid any suspicion that he was some malignant fellow, trying to paralyse the German will to victory at one of its great poles of energy, he had begun by reminding the General of how, in the year 1914, the world at large had foretold Germany's imminent defeat. "You don't know Germany," he had said to his South American business friends, when they had prophesied that she would soon be lying with her back broken under Russia's heel; and now he had come to the Germans with his message: "If you haven't been in America, you don't know what sort of bloodhounds you've got after you." The United States were not to be compared with Roumania, or Italy, he explained, although the latter had standing armies. America would cover the Front with engines of destruction, and behind each one would be a team of smart, hawk-eyed fellows all spoiling for a fight, fellows whose spirit had never been broken by a drill-sergeant.

But at this point, the words died on his lips, as he observed the General's smile of polite superiority: and he said to himself, with full assurance in his heart: "With open eyes ye rush on to your destruction, and there shall be great lamentation over you." His thoughts had wandered far from the occasion and the moment; as he looked through the window to the westward, he seemed to be speaking to a multitude of assembled Germans—a vast expanse of upturned faces—who listened to the old man's hoarse entreaties. He had sunk into a deep reverie, and his fingers trembled slightly, as he held his long cigar.

Schieffenzahn, with others who shared his views, had recently contrived to baffle the Pope's peace efforts, and he now thanked the Dutchman politely for his pains. He had quite different information from America, backed by statistics and

borne out by expert evidence. Herr van Ryjlte greatly underestimated the striking power of the German Army, which was the result of long training, and which had had no equal for the past half-century. Of course, he was particularly grateful for this frank and friendly expression of opinion, and if his Dutch friend wished to do a much-needed service to the nation in its hour of trial, he might use his influence to destroy the prejudice which was felt in neutral countries against the annexation of Belgium to the German Empire. Belgium itself would be much better off: she would be an independent Federal State, like Bavaria or Saxony, and a part of the greatest of the European Powers. What could she possibly want more?

Van Ryjlte's arms dropped helplessly.

"How about freedom?" he asked. "The freedom of a people?"

Schieffenzahn laughed. "Little peoples can have but little freedom. Within the German Empire, Belgium already enjoys more liberty than she did before the War. The stronger the army, the greater is the liberty it guards."

"Perfectly conclusive," agreed the Dutchman, and promised to do his best. But he meant something quite different. . . . He saw it was useless, and his hands gripped his thighs beneath the table as he resolved to sell every sort of holding he had in Germany, as quickly and quietly as possible: currency, Government loans, shares and debentures of the great Schilles works, and his credits with German firms.

"When a ship is certain to sink, a rat that did not leave it would be a fool, and deserve to drown," he reflected, grimly trying to dispel his gloom, as he put sugar in his coffee. The familiar proverb, which laid aspersions on the rat, had no doubt been invented by Insurance Companies or skippers full of whisky. For as the rat went on board of its own free will, on the assumption that the ship would float, as any reasonable ship might be expected to do, it was justified before God and the world, if it left the ship before it had to bear the consequences of the Captain's incompetence. . . . He genially

apologized for his intreferece in matters of policy, which came very ill from a guest. "But," he added, with a faint smile, "do not consider me as a guest, but as a troublesome and unwelcome relative, who has come here with the best intentions, to warn—say, a son-in-law—against a risky business transaction."

"I like 'son-in-law,' we'll leave it at that," said Schieffenzahn with a laugh, and they sat down to talk. . . .

The city of Brest-Litovsk, beyond the railway station and the great blue-towered cathedral, lay ghost-like and silent as death at the foot of the citadel, where the Operations Section and its infrequent guests were housed in a collection of hutments and barrack-buildings. During the fighting which had led to the capture of the city, it had been gutted by fire, and was now a desert, and a habitation of ghosts. Along the grey streets the windowless façades stood up apparently undamaged, but behind them was nothing, or a mass of crumbled ruins. Broad desolate stretches traversed by roads and lined with heaps of debris from which chimneys protruded, marked the sites of wooden houses, of which only the brickwork of the fireplaces survived. Above it all the snow was drifting, for the snow had come. Since midnight it had been falling in heavy silent flakes, sometimes caught and driven by the wind, downwards through the white air. The sky, yellow and lowering, gave promise of much more snow to come, when in the middle of the morning van Ryjlté had been fetched from the station in a small sleigh. He had stopped several times on the way, and in the company of the young Lieutenant who was with him, whom he immediately presented with a magnificent cigar, promising him some more as soon as he unpacked, had peered through the doorways of the stone and brick houses in this city where an Imperial garrison rubbed shoulders with an ancient and famous Jewish community. Brest, as it is called in Lithuanian, or Brisk, as the Jews have it, was the home of the Brisker Rabbim, he reflected, and as a collector of Hebrew manuscripts, he had hoped to find much spoil. . . . Cats ran

mewing up broken staircases; tall grey twisted shrubs were growing in the ground-floor rooms, and on the copings or the gutted floors of the upper stories brown weeds and grasses shivered in the wind. Everywhere warnings were posted against entering these ruined houses. Men had built them, van Ryjlte reflected, and probably men would build them up once more. In this way Corinth and Jerusalem, Alexander and Rome, had all passed and come to life again; war and peace were the ebb and flow of humanity's tide:—it was good to live behind a dyke, he thought.

The day had begun successfully with the Dutchman's visit, but there were some awkward hours ahead and Schieffenzahn would need all his wits about him. He clenched his fists. He wouldn't be taken in by this plausible rubbish: he would go straight on, and people in the way had better mind their toes. He stamped genially up and down the room, in the darkest corner of which was a camp-bed; there he worked and slept all the time he was at Brest. Old Lychow was the next item: "Lychow 4.30" was written in red ink on the calendar. Another of these grey-haired fools who waste the best hours of the day with their tedious importunities. Oh, these Generals! If he ever said what he thought to one of them, it would get about that that brute Schieffenzahn could not be decently polite to senior officers. It was already three o'clock, and after that strong Java coffee he could work with a will. He had first to reconsider Ober-Ost's proposal for the administration of the newly-occupied Ukrainian territories. The document was already adorned with a number of Austrian protests and counter-proposals; all the fault of that confounded Lychow, with his staff celebrations, where Count Dubna had made his drunken speeches. Thank God, the man had now definitely become a hospital case, and was being treated at Baden-Wien. But that did not affect the difficult relations between Austrians and Germans which were becoming more serious every month. A large-leaved atlas of the occupied territories was spread out

with the documents on the white deal desk, the centre of which was covered with green baize. There must be a way out of these difficulties, and Schieffenzahn was the man to find it. But first he must polish off this fellow Lychow, this narrow-minded quarrelsome pedant, this old dug-out from the depths of Brandenburg; the whole clan of them had always been prating and plotting on the wrong side, i.e. against Bismarck. "Let him come," he said softly to himself as he arranged the papers; "he'll find his business settled already." He took down the receiver and said to the sergeant who answered the telephone:

"Matz, wire as follows at once to the Kommandantur at Mervinsk: 'Settle Bjuscheff case according to instructions already received, and report duly carried out within twenty-four hours.' Bring me before half-past four a notification from the telegrapher on duty that the order has gone."

The sergeant answered: "Very good, Sir," repeated the message, and Schieffenzahn hung up the receiver. As he gave the order he felt for an instant an oppression at his heart, but at the same time a sense of grim satisfaction at the thought that Herr von Lychow was coming to waste time over an affair that had long since been settled. For a few seconds he was conscious of this feeling of constriction, and realized that it was due to the strong coffee he had drunk—coffee of a freshness and purity to which they were unaccustomed in blockaded Central Europe. The room seemed dark for three o'clock in the afternoon, and he went to the window. Courtyard No. IV lay deep and silent beneath its soft covering of white. There were great ridges of snow on the roofs to the right of him, and on the casements, from whose chimneys the yellowish smoke of burning wood swirled merrily upwards. The room was pleasantly warm, full of the pleasant fragrance of cigars—a man could sit there comfortably, with plenty of light, and do his work in peace. He switched on the electric light, and its yellow glow beat down from beneath the green shade of the office lamp, and the window turned into an opaque square of blue in the semi-darkness. He leaned his head on his fleshy

hand and studied the memorandum of the Austrian authorities, drawn up by the Foreign Minister, and liberally bespattered with notes and comments. If only the Austrians would consent to a German General being appointed member of the new Ukraine Council, with a casting-vote, wherever the new capital might be—in Kieff or Odessa—a great deal could be done to meet their views. There was a certain Hetman Skoropatzki who made himself very prominent; he could be titular head of the new State, just like one of those horses' heads that used to be nailed on the gables of barns. "O Fallada, do you hang there?" suddenly came into his mind from a memory of Grimm's fairy tales: he probably had not thought of it for fifty years. However, he put everything else out of his mind, and concentrated on the text before him and the interplay of political and economic claims involved by it. He paid little attention to questions of nationality, which were set forth at length, such as the claims of the Poles against the Ukrainians, and their demand that the Cholm county should be assigned to the new Polish Kingdom—he was much more interested in the acquisition and transport of the Ukrainian wheat. He suddenly realized that the control of the harvest was the key to the whole position; on this point he must be firm: everything else hung on this. At the end of 1917 it was no easy matter to form a correct estimate of the economic factors of the situation.

Punctually at half-past four the faint clink of Exzellenz von Lychow's spurs was heard at Schieffenzahn's door. At five minutes to five he departed. Their interview was noteworthy in many respects; both men spoke their minds, and the result was what might have been expected.

Lychow had left his cloak outside, as it was covered with snow. The old gentleman sat, with his gold-laced cap on his knees, a glove on his clenched left hand—he had politely taken off the other to shake hands with the enemy. At first he missed something—of course it was his long straight sword that stood so comfortably between his knees, and was so convenient

to hang his cap on; a man cannot express his feelings so pointedly without the support of the long piece of steel which has swung at his side for nearly forty years. Schieffenzahn, in a loose *Litevka*, which he liked to wear unbuttoned, so that he could put his hands in his trouser-pockets, had the advantage of him, thought Lychow.

He began by asking whether the Quartermaster-General was aware of the position: there had been unwarrantable interference with the judicial authority of the Division, and a perfectly regular legal decision had been treated with contempt. His tone had already become rather acid; but Schieffenzahn, with the genial propitiatory smile of a younger man humouring an old man's whim, reassured him:

He had read through the papers himself once again during the last few days and he could not understand what objection His Excellency could have to the decision which the court martial officer at Ober-Ost had recommended to him after mature consideration, and which he thoroughly approved.

Between the two antagonists was a broad expanse of writing-table; on it was an inkpot made of the cast-steel base of a hand-grenade, a flattened brass shell-case for an ash-tray, copper limber-rings for paper-weights, and some unpleasant-looking shell splinters, such as could be picked up everywhere in the lines. On the right was the telephone, on the left the Ukraine papers; in a black papier maché bowl with little golden stars on it lay the fountain-pens, copying-pencils, large coloured pencils, red, green, and blue, and ordinary lead pencils with blunt points adapted to Schieffenzahn's well-known marginal scrawls. It seemed to Lychow that the table was getting broader and broader, as if each of them was at the edge of a continent, a flat plain peopled with pigmies, tiny specks called men; and he and Schieffenzahn yonder, swollen to the stature of colossi, crouched or glared in hatred on the confines of this world. He felt he ought never to have come here. His baggy-checked junior opposite made him feel that he was certainly the weaker man, perhaps only to-day because he felt unwell, or

perhaps just because he had justice upon his side. A man who recognizes justice, must also recognize that it imposes limitations, he thought, already absorbed in his own reflections before the battle had fairly started. To a man who respects justice, his neighbour's flower-beds are sacred. A man who does not respect it, may perhaps live three stories lower down, but with his thick skin and tough skull, he plunges about in forbidden regions: it is nothing to him if they are forbidden. "I have made a colossal blunder: a man can fight better at a distance. . . ." He began to grow angry with himself at these meandering reflections, took out one of his own cigarettes and tapped it on the case, and asked, with an appearance of unconcern, what was the Major-General's view of the situation as a whole: was he going to abolish completely the independent legal authority of the Divisions, and introduce a new military code, according to which justice might indeed be sought for, but when found, was to be thrown into the waste-paper basket at the caprice of a higher court, or even one of equal jurisdiction, which might happen to think differently?

In reply to which Schieffenzahn growled out that nobody could have more respect for the jurisdiction of so experienced a soldier and one who stood so high in His Majesty's favour, but matters of policy were not everyone's business. Apparently the members of the Divisional court martial had missed the most important aspect of the case, which it was his duty to take into account.

Lychow felt that he must keep calm: this was the core of the dispute between them. But he did not want to plunge rashly into such fundamental issues. So he said quietly: "But, my dear Schieffenzahn, how is my court martial officer, who is a capable man—as I think you will admit—to find out which is the court competent to deal with a given charge? If you thrust your more enlightened views on us in this way, we shan't be inclined to refer our cases to you."

Schieffenzahn was becoming annoyed. Did the old figure-head take him for a child?

In spite of his irritation, he answered in a matter-of-fact tone that if an explanation was due to anyone it was due to him. It was intolerable that a man sentenced to death as a seditious person, a slinking Bolshevik, should have been allowed to survive so long, and he had clearly and unmistakably intimated his wish that the sentence should be carried out. And instead of obeying a plain order, they came to him with quibbles about jurisdiction and legal competence. He, Schieffenzahn, was responsible for seeing that nothing should endanger the German victory, at least on the Eastern Front. He had to keep the army well in hand. When such issues were at stake it was not time to be splitting hairs about justice and injustice. He would be the last man to upset the authority of a General. (That sounds quite Fritz-like, thought Lychow scornfully.) But His Excellency von Lychow was the last man from whom he would have expected to have to endure all this stuff and nonsense about courts and jurisdictions.

Lychow bowed slightly, and he thanked Schieffenzahn for his good opinion. He said that the matter had gone far beyond a mere question of jurisdiction. It was a question of plain justice—whether in Prussia there was to be equal justice for every man, as the Bible says: "One scale, one measure, and one weight shalt thou have for thee and for the stranger within thy gates. I the Lord have spoken it." He was quoting at random and his legs quivered as he spoke.

Schieffenzahn made a polite gesture of agreement. There must assuredly be justice and therefore no exceptions. As every day a thousand men fell as a sacrifice to the German victory, he supposed that a Russian deserter, who had so disgracefully abandoned his post in the prison-camp, might well fall with them. And he smiled amicably, delighted at the cunning with which he had caught the old gentleman in his own trap.

But Otto Gerhard von Lychow smiled too: he had got Schieffenzahn now; he had managed to lure him on to ground where that laborious intellect was hardly at its best.

"Certainly, Herr Kamerad," he said, "you have put the case very well. Throughout this War, at every moment of the day and night, innocent men have gone to their deaths, all honour to them. But the responsibility for this rests with all the generations that have built up the State, and also with the men themselves. They agreed to take part in the pageant of history, and their children and grandchildren must reap the fruits of their sacrifice. Of course, it was to some extent imposed on them; still, it may be considered voluntary, as long as the country is ready to obey the decisions of its responsible leaders. But now, Herr Kamerad, I am sorry to have to point out a slight flaw in your argument. Let me finish what I have to say," he exclaimed, as Schieffenzahn prepared to answer. "Do I send my men into action with the intention of getting them killed? If I had a voice in the matter they should all come back alive, every one of them, sir! If that is impossible, I submit sorrowfully to the inevitable—as long as war is the ultimate means of making a nation great. But you, on the other hand, are proposing to sacrifice against his will a man well known to be innocent, because in the furtherance of your purposes you think merely to do the State a service. The soldier always goes into battle with a certain degree of willingness, for he thinks there is a shadow of a possibility that he may return; in the last resort, he puts his life in God's hands, for the sake of his home, his country, and his Emperor. But this Russian—the machinery of justice is to be used to put him to death unjustly. Do you dare to compare him with a German soldier?"

"I do," said Schieffenzahn nodding. "Look at the facts. How long does this degree of willingness last? If the German soldier refuses to obey orders, he is shot. And as for that shadow of a possibility of returning—if he's lucky this time, he'll be for it next time. Consider, Exzellenz. Phosgene shells, and gas attacks, are gradually reducing the scope of the Divine Mercy that you mentioned. The art of war, looked at from the technical point of view, seems to be intended to put God in His

proper place. I prefer—though I am afraid I shall offend you—to take the plain blunt view of the situation: the State creates justice, the individual is a louse.”

Von Lychow leaned back in his chair and said softly: “If I thought that was true, I should feel no better than a dog. The State creates justice, does it? No, Sir, it is justice that preserves the State. I learnt that as a boy, and that alone gives a meaning to life, in my view. It is because justice is the foundation of all States, that nations have the right to tear themselves to pieces in their defence. But when a State begins to work injustice, it is rejected and brought low. I know, as I sit here under your lamp fighting for the life of this poor Russian, that I am fighting for something greater than your State—I mean for mine! For the State as the instrument of eternity. States are like vessels: and vessels wear out and break. If these cease to serve the purposes of God, they collapse like houses of cards, when the wind of Providence blows upon them. But I, General Schieffenzahn, know that justice and faith in God have been the pillars of Prussia, and I will not look on while her rulers try to bring them down.”

The small dark room, in which the sole illumination was the circle of light from the green-shaded bulbs in the centre, seemed to stretch away to infinity round the two men who sat there contending for a man's life. Outside in the vast silence the faint sound of snow could be heard eddying against the window-panes. Von Lychow got up and, absorbed in his reflections, absent-mindedly drew the curtains in this room that was not his. Schieffenzahn looked at him quizzically. To think that an old stick like this should come to him with quotations from the Bible, as if Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe* had never been written. Did such superannuated old dug-outs think that they could guide and preserve the German Empire? At last, as he toyed with a paper-weight in the shape of a Roman sword, made from the limber-ring of a heavy mortar and inlaid with copper, he asked if His Excellency was prepared to take his oath that Prussia had grown up in obedience to God's com-

mandments. Maria Theresa and the Polish nation had expressed quite a different view on several occasions, and the proletariat had the most singular notions on the subject. And, smiling down on von Lychow from the superior height of the nineteenth century, he began cautiously to pull to pieces the old gentleman's political theology: touching upon the franchise, the rights of property, and the distribution of land.

But Schieffenzahn's superior attitude was lost upon von Lychow. Might must not be divorced from Right. If Schieffenzahn's objections were more in accordance with reality, yet he was well aware that all human institutions were imperfect, and the influence of the people still counted for something in the formation of the future. But nothing in the world could justify a State setting in motion the mighty machinery of the law against the innocent, and so destroy a nation's sense of justice. The national sense of justice, he said, quivering with emotion, was the symbol of Divine justice, and if it is thrown on the scrap-heap on political grounds, no one could tell whether, as a result of such an outrage, in the eternal spheres of the Divine justice sentence might not be passed on the State itself: *Mene, tekel, upharsin* might be seen faintly glimmering on the wall of a room in which a General was using his pitiable logic to bring God's commandments into contempt.

"Pitiable logic," indeed! Albert Schieffenzahn started in his chair. He had borne with the pious old dodderer and kept his temper, so long as he had remained polite. But this he could not stand, and in a harsh imperious tone he requested von Lychow to moderate his language. He must remember he was not at Herrenhut or at a mother's meeting.

Von Lychow slowly drew on his glove. He was familiar with that sort of talk, he said. The Lychows had tried to get rid of it after Saalfeld and Jena, but half Prussia had been swamped by it. "No doubt the Schieffenzahns think it extremely up-to-date," he added. "However, there's no more to be said," and he flicked the cigarette-ash off his trousers.

Albert Schieffenzahn breathed heavily, and thrust out his

lower jaw, bulldog fashion, though it was by nature somewhat receding. He thanked von Lychow for his observations: he had enjoyed the lecture on Divine Providence, and now he proposed to make some remarks in return. He flattered himself he knew all about discipline and the best means of enforcing it. He had therefore telegraphed orders to the Kommandantur at Mervinsk to the effect that the sentence should be punctually carried out by the following afternoon. He saw Lychow start, and grip the back of the chair. Yes, he went on, he had done so without the slightest hesitation. His Excellency might, of course, appeal to the Emperor afterwards. Then he, Schieffenzahn, who was so unpopular and had already taken so much upon himself, might get into hot water again: but he did not mind. However, he now wanted to make the difference between them perfectly clear. In His Excellency's opinion the execution of the Russian would be prejudicial to discipline, but in his own, it was necessity. Their views were diametrically opposed. Very well, then. As His Excellency declined all responsibility—"Of course I do," said Lychow emphatically—he had better give up his leave and let the 5.20 D. train go off without him. He could go straight back to Mervinsk by the next train, or by a car which would be at His Excellency's disposal, and personally prevent the Ortskommandant from carrying out the order of the Q.M.G.—in other words, of the Commander-in-Chief. If he, Schieffenzahn, then sent a lieutenant and ten men to take the Russian, dead or alive—and he leaned forward and smiled insolently at his visitor who, with his cap in his gloved fingers, was staring at him, motionless, from behind his chair—His Excellency had better place himself at the head of his Division, and with full understanding of the consequences, resist him by open force, and, with his Bible in his pocket, return blow for blow in defence of what he conceived to be right. "Don't you agree, Your Excellency?" he asked, as Lychow opened his mouth to reply, but merely swallowed and said nothing. "As you decline all responsibility,

and are quite sure that you have the interests of the Empire and of justice on your side. . . ."

The room was strangely still. The silence that surrounded Lychow was like the silence of an Arctic waste, cut off from all the world.

"God help me," he said at last: "I'm a Prussian General . . ."

"So Your Excellency will proceed on leave, and not declare a private war on me, but yield to my poor logic after all?"

Lychow nodded: he had come into the room pale and determined, but now he turned to go with bowed head and heavy footsteps. Schieffenzahn got up politely, and pushed his chair back sharply and exultantly—the noise he made echoed against the wooden walls like the slamming of a hundred doors. As he stood there, he pushed up the green-shaded electric lamp, the better to illuminate his triumph, so that its yellow glare lit up the battlefield as far as the door.

Lychow walked to the window with his spurs tinkling, just as if he had been alone, pulled the curtain aside, stared out vacantly for a moment, then turned round and looked steadily at his victorious antagonist.

"I am only an old man, Herr Schieffenzahn, nobody can jump over his own shadow, however small it is: and I've cast my shadow for seventy-two years."

Then he laid two fingers on his cap and went.

Major-General Schieffenzahn, standing with his legs apart, watched with a sardonic smile the door close behind a beaten man.

THE BOMBARDMENT OF PARIS

FROM

"THE PARIS GUN" BY HENRY W. MILLER

Saturday, the 23rd, began to dawn in Paris as one of those rarely beautiful early spring mornings for which France is famous. A persistent dull rumble, as of an approaching storm, came out of the north from the savage offensive begun two days before, in the early morning hours of March 21st, by the German Armies of Von Hutier, Marwitz and Below against the British Fifth Army under General Gough before Amiens and Byng's Third Army to the north. But neither the sinister significance of the offensive, going worse than badly for the British armies, nor the hour and a half of suspense of the night before, between the terrifying warning by siren horns of the approach of German bombing planes and the ringing of bells and the sounding of the retreat by bugles to announce their return across the lines and the end of danger, could diminish the delight of the early risers with the beautiful morning. Slowly the mists last to rise over the Seine floated away, and by seven o'clock all Paris was asparkle with bright spring sunshine.

All over the great city men and women were preparing to leave for their early morning appointments, offices, factories and stores. By 7:15 the streets began to fill, metro lines were working up to their 8:45 heaviest morning load; the whole great city of Paris was tuning up for another of its busy days, withal an anxious one, as was evident from the intent faces on the streets and in the subway cars, eagerly examining the early papers to learn of yesterday's happenings on the Front.

Time's pendulum and fate's plans worked on inexorably

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to 7:20 when the few people about on the Quai de Seine in the northeastern section of the fortified portion of Paris were violently startled by the crash of something that exploded on the stone pavements in front of house number 6 along the Quai. Fragments and missiles hissed through the air, spattering the stone buildings and breaking windows. Seemingly no one was hurt. The immediate question to everyone near-about was, "What was it?" To soldiers it sounded like the explosion of a 77 mm. high explosive shell; to civilians it resembled the crash of a 22 pound air bomb, the sound of which was becoming familiar to people in Paris. Examination of the exact spot of the explosion failed to answer the question. As always, a few hurried to the scene, curiosity overcoming caution. Fragments of metal were found, some of them too hot to hold. These were shown to the gendarmes of the vicinity who had been instructed to hurry to the scenes of explosions of air bombs, the only kind Paris had known so far, and for three years only at night. To some of those more distant who had heard the explosion, it meant the enemy; to others something less serious; most of the people of the city had not heard it at all. So by itself this one explosion meant but little.

Some days before, the great hand grenade factory at Cour-neuve, a short distance to the northeast of Paris, had been destroyed in a series of explosions that eclipsed even the noise of the 660 pound air bombs dropped on Paris in the night raid of January 30-31. The people of Paris and its suburbs were at once notified by posters that some unexploded grenades would be destroyed and they should not be alarmed if several more explosions occurred during the following days. So to some of those not so near, this was merely one of those explosions. To others it was just another of the multitude of unusual things happening during the war, to be alarmed over or to be dismissed with a resigned shrug and the familiar "C'est la guerre." In most of the city, things went on as usual; streets were becoming filled with automobiles, wagons, and hand carts; people hurried along the sidewalks, and business at the

newspaper stands was brisk. The new offensive was alarming and newspapers were greatly in demand.

For twenty minutes nothing further happened; no screeching of sirens, no sounds but the growing hum of a great city starting the busiest day of the week. The more timid near the scene of the explosion ventured out to see what had happened; the crowd grew rapidly; gendarmes questioned people and jotted down notes in their pocket books. Speculation was rife as to the nature of the bomb and its source. Those about examined the damage, studied the fragments of metal, searched the sky for planes, and hazarded guesses with their neighbours. "Air bombs," was the common verdict. But what curious bombs!

At 7:40, a second explosion occurred, not so loud to those at the scene of the first because it was a mile and a half away. But the sound and shock were terrific to the hundreds about the Gare de l'Est where it occurred. The pavements here were crowded, even so early. In front of the railway station there is an entrance to the three metro or subway lines which have a junction at this point. The bomb struck on the cobbles of the Boulevard de Strasbourg, not a hundred feet from one entrance to the subway lines, and exploded entirely above the surface of the street. For an instant the hundreds of people were stunned; the cobbles were torn up for several yards and fragments of metal and stone spattered the walls of houses and tore the people; the concussion broke windows all about, turned over and demolished a news stand and some carts. The natural instinct of the crowd was to flee in any direction from the point of the explosion. Eight of those who lay about on the streets and pavements were dead. Thirteen others were more or less seriously hurt. When the first effect of the shock had passed, some of the crowd and proprietors of shops hurried to the dead and wounded and carried them into the shops or assisted them on their way. If those who launched that bomb could have seen the effect, they probably would have felt that they had made a very effective beginning. Only the

second bomb, and it landed in the centre of one of the busiest streets, near one of the busiest metro stations, at nearly the busiest hour of the day; hardly to be bettered for the greatest effect on morale.

But tragedy is so relative and so local. To those only a quarter of the distance across the city, this sound was merely that of another explosion of grenades at Courneuve. Most of the people in the city had not heard it, or only so faintly as not to notice it. As the people about the scene became assured that the danger was past, they gathered about the spot in the street as if expecting to find there the answer to the question. Fragments of metal were found, thick, heavy, ragged; some of them were grooved, some threaded, some machined smooth and cylindrical, as on a lathe. Someone picked up a piece of copper with grooves in it. The larger fragments were too hot to hold; one of them bore the designation, 8-. "Air bomb" was still the verdict. But why no anti-aircraft barrage firing on the edge of the city, no sirens sounding on the larger buildings and on the fire trucks driven through the streets on such occasions? Intense concern and curiosity prevailed about the scenes of the two explosions. But in most of the city, and to most of the people, nothing had happened. Two unusual sounds had been heard, but such sounds mean so much less in the daytime than at night, and particularly at the time when one is concerned with starting his day's work.

The second explosion set the wheels of officialdom grinding. Anything that happens in so public a place, killing eight and wounding thirteen of a crowd that is hurrying by three separate subway lines to all parts of the city, quickly receives every variety of attention. The gendarmes immediately telephoned to headquarters the nature and extent of the calamity in so far as their hasty examination permitted them to explain. Newspaper offices learned from Police Headquarters the causes of the sounds and where the explosions had occurred. Reporters hurried to the scenes. Those who had been near by when the second explosion occurred met acquaintances in the subway

trains and told the story, probably without loss of dramatic details. Many changed cars and told others. The three subway lines from the Gare de l'Est became multiple and amplifying telephones reporting the happening in all directions within the hour.

President Poincare, M. Clemenceau, and General Herr's Artillery office were called from Police Headquarters and told such details as were known. Officers of the army technical offices were already inquiring about the sounds; why and where? They took nothing for granted. Artillery and air service officers and experts on explosives departed at once to investigate. There was intense activity at the aerodromes on the northern edge of the city and airmen were climbing into the sky to find the supposed planes that were dropping the bombs. The observers at the anti-aircraft batteries were searching the sky with glasses and sound detectors; it was a perfectly clear day and one should be able to find easily the large, slow bombing planes, however high.

Officers of the Service for the Defence of Paris were more than active; they had learned from the Police Departments what the sounds meant and were calling the Front line observers through French Army Headquarters at Provins to learn why they had not been informed as usual of the passing of the planes over the Lines. Always when planes were detected crossing the Line at night, the Service for the Defence of Paris was called over a direct line through Provins and the sirens on buildings and fire trucks began their screeching, airmen climbed into the sky, anti-aircraft gunners went on watch, searchlights pierced the darkness with their shafts of light. But the observers at the Front insisted that no planes had crossed; there must be some mistake.

Twenty-five minutes more passed; plenty of time for any small alarm to be dispelled and for those at a distance to forget the sound. And most of the people of the city had not heard either explosion. In this time, some newspaper reporters had visited one or the other of the scenes, gathered

some details, taken a picture or two, and were hurrying back to their offices to make up an "extra." Representatives of the Municipal Laboratory and army offices visited the scenes. To both of these the gendarmes gave fragments of metal which they had found or had taken from others. M. Poincare, M. Clemenceau and Colonel Battisti also visited the scene of the second explosion.

At 8:05 there was a third explosion, on the Rue de Chateau-Landon. Except to those in the immediate vicinity, the sound was more muffled than the previous two; the shell had burst within a building. But it had an alarming significance to those living near the scene of the first explosion, only a quarter mile to the northeast. Rue Chateau-Landon was a short street, only a few blocks east of the Gare du Nord. The building struck was a relatively new, reinforced concrete factory and storage building on the west side of the street. The bomb struck the front wall just above the steel girder over some double doors or windows on the street side of the second floor. It was travelling with such velocity that it passed through the concrete above and behind the steel beam before it exploded, probably in mid air. All of the windows, frames and glass alike were blown out, and the concrete sills and sides of the doorway shattered. But on the floor below, the small panes of glass were not broken; nor above. Apparently the full force of the explosion was spent in the space of the second floor and in partially demolishing the concrete walls. Fragments of the bomb were strewn all about the second floor, which fortunately was unoccupied. A few people hurried in the direction of the sound from the scenes of the other two explosions.

Still the business of the city grew with no noticeable interruption. The subway trains were carrying their heaviest loads. Children were at school or were on their way. Stores and offices were open or were opening. Rumours were spreading rapidly; but Paris is a great city and it is not easy either to accelerate or to reduce appreciably the activity of such a machine in the daytime, particularly at such a time of the day.

Officers of the Paris Defence Service were debating what to do. Artillery officers and Municipal Laboratory men were studying the bomb fragments and the effects. At 8:17, after an interval of twelve minutes, only half the previous, and too short to permit one to forget the last sound, a bomb passed through a northeast top floor window at number 15 Rue Charles-Cinq and exploded as it was passing through the floor into the story below. This house, which was three stories high and of the older type of construction, with walls of rubble masonry, light hewn beams in the roofs and floors and thin tile roof, was two and a half miles from the scene of the first explosion, two miles from the second and two and a quarter miles from the third. Rue Charles-Cinq was another short street only two blocks long, running northwest and southeast, parallel to the Seine, and only two blocks from it at the Isle de St. Louis.

The explosion at 8:17 was the least extensively heard of the four; quite muffled since it was entirely within walls. But tragedy accompanied it; one person was killed, the ninth in an hour, for it was now just an hour since the bombs had begun to fall. The average interval in this hour had been fifteen minutes. This, though but an average, was to fix itself on the public mind for a long time. Firemen hurried to the scene lest the destruction be of such a character as to start a serious fire; fortunately no fire was started.

The machinery of the Paris Defence Service office, the Police Department, the Municipal Laboratory and the Artillery offices was grinding furiously. Air observers had climbed two miles and more into the sky and searched in vain for the bombing planes or Zeppelins. The telephones in all technical service offices were jangling or were busy with conferences about the nature of the bombardment and the curious fragments of metal. It was already clear to the air bomb and artillery projectile experts that the bombs were not air bombs. No air bomb case was ever made of steel over two inches thick; nor was any such case ever supplied with copper bands. And

some of the fragments of this thing had grooves in them, cut in the steel itself.

At the offices of the Paris Defence Service, the more vitally serious question was, "What shall be done about it?" Provisions had been made for daytime air raids. But no such raids had occurred since May 11th, 1915. Much had happened since. The people of Paris had undergone great hardships; perhaps they could be thrown into a serious panic if the wrong steps were taken. Nothing serious happened when alarms were given at night; people were at home; stores, offices, factories were closed. But what would happen now, at such a time of the day, and all through the day, the busiest day of the week, with the people already greatly worried over the most serious of all offensives so far waged on the Western Front since 1914 or at Verdun in 1916. The decision to sound a general alarm was not to be made hastily nor lightly. Another explosion occurred at 8:35, after an eighteen minute interval, at number 24 Rue des Ardennes. This was far up in the northeast corner of the walled sections of the city. The street, three blocks long, ran almost north and south, and number 24 was on the east side of the centre block. It was two and a half miles from the scene of the last explosion on Rue Charles-Cinq and three-fourths of a mile from the first. The sixth bomb struck at 8:50 in the courtyard at the rear of the Hotel Beauvais at 68 Rue Francois Miron, less than a half mile from the previous. The material damage was not as great as was the shock and alarm to the people of the hotel. They had heard plainly the previous two explosions and faintly the second at 7:40. In spite of all that had happened, however, the bombardment with its six bombs in ninety minutes had not seriously alarmed one per cent of the people of the city. Many had been hearing the sounds, and rumours were travelling rapidly. But this was one of the world's largest cities; that portion within the walls was nearly eight miles east and west by five north and south, and this was not much more than half of all of Paris. The sounds were beginning to travel about with much greater leaps than

in the beginning. By half and quarter miles leaps at first, now by two and two and a half mile leaps. There was just no following them. The locations of bursts seemed to be along a fairly well defined northeast and southwest path, but apparently there was no objective. So far air bombers had been trying to drop their bombs at definite points, on definite and important objectives; the gas works, electric power plants, munition factories, and the Ministry of Armament. Apparently these bombs were not aimed at anything; if they were, the marksmanship was exceedingly poor, or the choice of targets was beyond comprehension. The Quai de Seine was of little importance, and three bombs had been dropped in this vicinity. The second bomb had a real effect, but on people instead of on any important buildings. The other two were hardly to be considered.

The seventh bomb upset any calculations which real or so-called experts may have attempted. It struck in the suburb town of Chatillon, southwest of Paris proper, and the point of the explosion, in front of the cemetery, at number 30 Rue de St. Cloud, was four and a half miles from the last and a quarter from the first. This was at 9:04, an interval of fourteen minutes since the last. Most of the people in Paris proper did not hear this, and those who were beginning to be alarmed had an interval of nearly a half hour since the explosion at 8:50 to become reassured before anything further happened.

In most quarters and in some offices, the belief still prevailed that Paris was being subjected to an air raid; a new and peculiar variety that was being staged in conjunction with the great offensive. In other offices, there was doubt growing to a certainty that it was not an air raid; the bombs were not bombs, but *projectiles*. But those to whom the fragments of metal meant projectiles knew that even to say projectiles implied an absurdity. One must have a gun to shoot a projectile. Frenchmen could not be shooting upon their own city. The last issue of bonds was not selling any too rapidly, it was true, and if Parisians could be made to believe that they were under

enemy gunfire, they might contribute more rapidly even what little they had left. But this thought was absurd. Propagandists had not hesitated to exaggerate any and all isolated atrocities into general practices to stir people to greater energies, to a more deadly fighting temper. But the deliberate shelling of one's own capital, the treasure of the whole nation. . . . Inconceivable! Though a few people insisted upon this explanation, those in the technical offices dismissed it. Men of the Municipal Laboratory and the Artillery headquarters, General Herr's office, had come to the conclusion that the "bombs" were projectiles; which can be fired only from guns; and Germans certainly were firing them. But from where? That could not be answered.

The question confronting the Paris Defence Service could no longer be evaded. The bombs had been dropping for nearly two hours; nine people had been killed, seventeen wounded, houses demolished, and alarming rumours were spreading; even that the German army was within field gun range of Paris. The business of the city was going on with little noticeable interruption or derangement, but gradually the rumours were affecting it. It made little difference to the Defence Service officers whether the bombs were bombs from airplanes or projectiles from guns. The effect was the same. A new emergency had arisen. The observers at the Front insisted that no bombing squadrons had passed over, not even isolated bombing planes, and certainly not Zeppelins. The airmen in the sky over Paris could find nothing, the battery observers could see nothing. Seemingly there was nothing.

Between 9:04 and 9:15, information was received of the seventh explosion, in Chatillon. A momentous decision was then made, and at 9:15 the order was given and at once carried out to sound the sirens. The significance of this decision was appreciated by those responsible; it was not easy to make it, and once executed, it could not be recalled. At 9:15, with the offices and stores all over the city functioning almost as usual, subway trains, busses, and trolley cars running on schedule,

children at school, men and women at work, many entirely ignorant of the disturbances, the sirens on all large buildings and on fire trucks passing through the streets began that screeching which for three years had been a dread sound to all Parisians. The effect was electrical. No wonder. They had come to expect it at night. Only the night before, the sirens had sounded a raid and for an hour and a half people waited in their homes or in the underground shelters for the crashing explosions. Instead, the bells and bugles sounded "All's well" without any bombs having been dropped. People had forgotten day raids, so the effect was all the more pronounced. Those giving the order for the alarm knew it would be, and had delayed as long as they could. At 9:14 all or nearly all was going well in most of the city. At 9:15 millions of people were suddenly being told to seek shelter and at once. They had no idea why, no knowledge of the nature of the danger, but they had learned that when the sirens sounded it was time to act, without any delay. So men, women, and children everywhere dropped what they were doing and a goodly proportion of them sought shelter; three millions of people at their daytime occupations.

No one could escape the sounds of those sirens. They were either very well or very poorly designed for their purpose. The very sound of them was terrifying and never to be forgotten. For over three years, Parisians had been hearing them and always at night, when whatever is apt to produce a feeling of terror is doubly effective. The city had had 384 bombs of all sizes dropped on it in twelve raids. On many nights, two, three and even four alarms had been sounded, some of them false. Planes had been detected crossing the line and the observers had no choice but to notify Paris at once. The sirens were sounded immediately and one knew that he had about twenty minutes to seek shelter. The entire city had been dark at night. The globes of the gas lamps had been painted a dark blue and the gas turned so low that there was not sufficient light to see even the sidewalks. In three years a hundred thousand people had left the city for less nerve-racking places. Those

who remained experienced a reaction to the sounds of the sirens that was out of proportion to the probabilities of personal danger. A few paid no attention to them. The business of the girls, soliciting along the Boulevards des Capucines and des Italiens, continued with but little change, a pitiful sign of desperate straits or of peculiar disregard of real danger. But most of the people were more prudent.

On the night of January 30-31, not two months before, the worst raid of the entire war had been staged. On that night, 141 bombs were dropped on the city, two of them weighing 660 pounds each. That night would never be forgotten; in thinking of it, one remembered sirens, and beginning twenty minutes later, the crashing explosions of bombs, sometimes two almost together. On the night of March 8-9, seventy bombs were dropped. And only twelve days since, on the night of March 11-12, another great raid had been made in which seventy planes came over and dropped eighty bombs. The alarm for that raid was sounded at 9:30. It was a beautiful starlight night; perfect for a raid. The streets as usual were almost without light. The lamps merely defined the edges of the pavements. When the sirens began their din, the performances in theatres stopped at once, hotel doors were closed, some people on the streets ran, others sought refuge more leisurely at the doors to underground shelters marked with the tiny blue lamps. That night the sirens sounded no false alarm, for twenty minutes after their first alarm people began to hear above the city the buzz characteristic of the German planes; also the hum of the French planes. The captive balloons that one saw anchored in the Gardens of the Tuileries and elsewhere about the city were let up with their streamers of steel wires to entangle unwary bombers; the anti-aircraft guns crackled all about the city and shrapnel shells burst in rapid succession all about the sky; a gorgeous spectacle. Then as one watched and listened, something struck with a sharp rattle on a tiled roof, or with a soft plunk in the earth near by; shrapnel balls sprinkled over the city. And after a few minutes one saw the

brilliant glare of an exploding bomb off to the northeast and heard at once the roar and rattle of it. The Germans may have been staging a reception for Mr. Newton Baker, the American Secretary of War, that night. He had arrived in Paris during the day on his first trip of inspection. And they did a thorough job, seeking out the Ministry of War, the Gas Works, and other important places. The damage wrought was not cleared up in a day and people had ample opportunity to see what the bomb explosions, heralded by the sirens, meant.

On the night of March 8-9, one bomb crashed through the six story building at number 5 Rue Geoffroy Maree, completely demolishing it. The fire which was started was extinguished with difficulty. The tenants of that building escaped only through their prudence in seeking the deep cellars when the sirens sounded. Pedestrians comprehended all this at a glance as they saw those familiar sights of destruction.

Even in the ordinary uneventful day, the Parisian was not permitted to forget that he lived in a besieged city. Plate glass windows everywhere were crisscrossed and decorated in the most fantastic designs with strips of gummed paper to prevent the concussions of near-by explosions from breaking them. Glass thus reinforced stands great abuse before it will break. And all about the city, works of art, statues, ornate gates, were piled over with bags of sand. All about the Louvre, the Gardens of the Tuileries, and in the Place de la Concorde, bags of sand were conspicuously in evidence.

So the effect of the alarm sounded by the sirens at 9:15 was truly electrical. Those who gave the order knew it would be. Bus and cab drivers pulled up to the curbs and hurried into the nearest cafes, cellars or other shelters. The passengers were left to dispose of themselves as they saw fit. They too sought shelter. Trolley cars were stopped and the motormen and passengers remained in the cars or alighted, as they chose. Workers in many offices, stores, factories, left for other shelters, or sought the most protected places in their buildings. Stores, cafes, restaurants were closed. Pedestrians hurried

down the steps into subway stations if any were near. In a few places, there was dangerous crowding, and some were hurt. Ticket offices in the railway stations were closed and some trains were cancelled. The city just stopped, and it did not require long. From the usual Saturday morning activity at 9:15, it was reduced in a comparatively few minutes almost to midnight inactivity; the silence became painful, and for the next hour the explosions of the bombs landing even miles away could be heard.

Fortunately, there were no signs of panic in this rapid transformation; no hysterical behaviour. Either as his native characteristic or as a war acquisition, the average Frenchman looked annoyed or worried under such circumstances; the peculiar pucker of his face on this occasion may have indicated fear, but not panic. He was extremely annoyed and was intensely concerned to know "why the alarm." Had it anything to do with the offensive? Had there been a break-through up on the Front? The war had developed in the people of France a peculiar resignation to the unusual, an acceptance of the inevitableness of tragedy. Most families had lost at least one member, but women did not weep. Each new tragedy, reverse, loss, seemed only to add to that concentrated cold fury that boded none the less ill to the enemy because it was usually hidden under a serene exterior. So the millions of Parisians sought shelter promptly, with obvious signs of great concern, some fear, but with no signs of panic. The hoped for answer to the vital question in the Defence Service office actually was, that people cannot participate in such a war for three and a half years and retain much, if any, capacity to be panicky. School children were marched as in fire drill to underground shelters and when later in the morning M. Poincare and M. Clemenceau visited a girls' school of about six hundred pupils, they found them singing the Marseillaise. The courts had just started and continued to dispose of the cases of those prisoners at hand; orders were given that no others be brought from the prisons.

The alarm had been given, obeyed. It remained then to be seen to what good or bad ends. Meanwhile, other wheels were

grinding. Even before the alarm was sounded, it had been determined in the Artillery offices that the "bombs" were projectiles; of peculiar design but nevertheless projectiles. Projectiles always imply guns, absurd and impossible as that might seem in this case. To date the Service for the Defence of Paris had not had to deal with guns. Since it became someone's duty to find, and, if possible, silence the guns, the Army Artillery Service automatically became a part of the Paris Defence Service. Among the fragments brought into the Artillery office were grooved pieces of copper and steel which showed that the gun had approximately sixty-four rifling grooves. The existence of grooves in fragments of steel was significant. Another fragment showed signs of screw threads midway in the shell cavity where a plate with a fuse might have been screwed in. There was evidence of a fuse in the base. The shell probably had two fuses. An eight inch shell, one or two narrow copper bands, the steel of the shell grooved, two fuses, and an abnormally thick side wall, over two inches, at the base.

"Extra" papers quickly appeared on the streets. The newsboys were besieged and many papers were sold before the police could seize them. The people detained in shelters were naturally more than eager for news. In the main the extras had not been censored. The orders against "too much" news, however accurate, were severe. The managers of some of the papers, mostly the socialistic variety, saw fit to be explosively irritated over this interference with their business.

By 9:30 the artillery officers were beginning to admit to themselves that the projectiles might be coming from within the German lines. The grooves in the steel and the enormously heavy side walls and base of the projectile indicated an extremely high power pressure, hence probably a correspondingly high initial velocity of the shell. It was true that the nearest point of the German line was sixty-seven miles away. The gun would certainly be at least six and possibly as much as ten miles behind the lines for even moderate safety. This made at least seventy-three and perhaps seventy-seven miles. No such range as this had ever been heard of. Artillerists knew of

a six inch gun of unusual length, 80 calibres, that had been made and tested in England some thirty years before by Sir Andrew Noble with which an unprecedented velocity of the projectile, 3200 feet per second, had been attained. Similar velocities had been attained in more recent tests, but with resultant ranges never in excess of thirty miles. In these days of spectacular developments, however, especially in the field of science, one was willing to believe almost anything possible. So with nothing very definite to confirm it, the conclusion was reached, particularly in the Artillery offices, that the bombardment was being conducted from within the German lines. Much more information than was then available would be necessary to determine anything further, particularly the exact location of the gun or guns. More definite information on the locations of explosions and effects was being received. This enabled a plotting of the first seven bursts on the city map. A line through bursts 5 and 7 passed almost due northeast, through the centre of the city. Bursts 1 and 2 were almost on this line, and 3 and 6 at almost equal distances from it but on opposite sides. The points of impact with the buildings which had been struck were on the north and east sides. So the projectiles were coming from the northeast.

Maps of the army fronts were consulted for clues on locations. A line running due northeast through the centre of Paris passed through the centre of the pronounced "corner" of the German line created the year before when they retired on the Somme. The city of Laon was in this corner or pocket, and the point of this corner was, or had been two days before, the nearest point of the German line to Paris. Some officers remembered, and by reference at once confirmed, that during the previous September formidable excavating, possibly for large gun emplacements, had been noticed in this salient. And an air photograph taken in merely general reconnaissance over this region on March 6th revealed two new railway curves of the kind commonly used in the French army for railway artillery, leading off to the southwest from the Laon-Amiens

railway line near the little village of Crepy. The railway lines were very distinct on the photograph but whatever was at their ends, if anything, where the excavating had been seen in progress, had been so well camouflaged as to defy detection. In such an emergency one is sorely tempted to accept seemingly reasonable conclusions. Perhaps it was not surprising then that certain artillery officers came to the conclusion as early as 9:30 that Paris was being bombarded by a new long range gun of about eight inch calibre, probably located in the region of Laon, and more than likely on one of those two new railway curves at Crepy, about 120 km. or 75 miles from the centre of Paris. They telephoned this information to the French General Headquarters at Provins and from there the information was relayed to General Bourgeois, who was in command of the sound ranging divisions of the French armies, composed of 32 units distributed along their Front. The same information was given to various other technical offices in Paris and before 11:00 it was telephoned to the American technical headquarters in Tours.

A communique was made up at 10:00 o'clock in some office in Paris, one of those from which information was given to the Press, and sent to the newspaper offices. This was displayed on bulletin boards and read as follows: "At 8:20 some German planes which were flying at a very great altitude succeeded in crossing the lines and in attacking Paris. They were at once pursued, both by the Paris Defence airplanes and those of the Front. Several of the points of fall of bombs have been registered. There are a few victims. A later communique will specify the results and the details of the raid."

Projectiles continued to fall at more or less regular intervals but at ever increasing distances from each other. At 9:20, five minutes after the alarm was sounded, one fell far up in the northeast corner of the city, seven miles from the last in Chatillon, but not quite a quarter mile from the fifth at 8:35 on the Rue des Ardennes. No one was killed nor wounded. The next, fifteen minutes later, at 9:35, fell in a garden, just

south of the Luxemburg Gardens on the south side of the Seine and four miles from the last shot. Again no one was killed and no one hurt. Practically everyone had by this time sought shelter.

At 9:45, after a ten minute interval another projectile struck, in the eighteenth arrondissement, only a mile from the one at 9:20. Again no one was killed or wounded. Only five minutes later, a record short interval for the day, a shell struck the roof or back wall of a five story apartment building on Rue Manin, completely demolishing the roof and back walls of two rooms. The people of this apartment were absent. Another good demonstration was provided of the destruction wrought upon houses of the older type of construction.

It was now thirty-five minutes since the alarm had been sounded, and the city was so silent, if one may say that so great a city is ever silent, that the people who had sought shelter everywhere, in cellars, stores or subways and were listening for any sounds that would tell them the reason for the alarm, could hear almost every explosion. Only a few people were on the streets. Some impatient and reckless ones had not sought shelter. Others had emerged quickly to learn the nature of the danger or to continue on some urgent mission. Had the bombardment been started in the night, people would have sought shelter promptly and would have remained there. But in the day, in the morning, on Saturday, a beautiful, bright spring day, it was different. One imagines so much when he cannot see. Sunshine seems to mock even real danger. By 11:00 more people were out. They had been hearing the explosions, north, south, but had seen nothing; they received no direct information; the explosions did not seem so severe, so the streets slowly became more active. Lunch time was not far distant, many housewives had not provided for it, nor for the evening meal; and provisions had to be secured for Sunday. Stores were offering the usual Saturday supplies of food. Paris housewives did their own shopping. Danger or no danger, sirens or not, there were many things that had to be done.

And the younger people, boys and girls who worked in offices, shops, small factories, had escaped from their work for the day and soon thousands of them were on the streets, searching the skies for the supposed planes, or trudging toward their homes. The transportation of the city had died at 9:15 and remained dead for six hours; in some cases for the remainder of the day. Many of the people who had been on the subway trains that drew into stations at 9:15 and stopped, had decided to walk underground, and people were found walking the subway tracks in both directions all over the city. This had never been done before and might never be done again. The emergency was unique. Many people remained for hours in the first places which they could reach when the alarm was sounded. The long silence following the projectile of 11:20 was reassuring, however, so greater numbers of people left shelter and went about their business.

At noon, the streets were almost crowded with people seeking food. Most shops, cafes and restaurants had been closed. Some proprietors had merely closed their doors and shutters, and people might come in. A few shops which were open on the street had been kept open all the time, and here women might be seen with their baskets, bargaining for what they wished, obviously nervous, glancing apprehensively toward the sky. Elsewhere a customer and the merchant were so absorbed in the bargain as to be unaware for the time of any danger. It was noticeable that many people hugged the walls of the houses as they hurried along the sidewalks. The silence, from 11:20, still unbroken at 12:30, was reassuring.

Various newspapers continued to publish "extras" or to put into their regular noon issues some of the facts of the bombardment, the places, effects and casualties. The police had orders to suppress at once all such issues, however, and some of the publishers were arrested for their disregard of censorship. The people wanted news; any papers containing even a pretence of news therefore sold rapidly, and some managers were highly incensed over the suppression of their papers. Either they did

not comprehend what the general publishing of all information would do or they did not care. M. Clemenceau spoke the truth when he said some time before in the Senate that he was "fighting foes within and without."

The first projectile of the afternoon struck at exactly one o'clock in the Gardens of the Tuileries near the edge of the Seine, spattering the boats with fragments of metal but injuring no one. At 1:15, another struck the cobbles on the north side of the pavement about the great statue in the centre of the Place de la Republique. People were all about again and though the heavy iron lamp post not ten feet away was not demolished, two people were killed and nine wounded on the pavement on the other side of the trolley tracks. The Place was soon crowded with people eager to see the damage. At about the same time a wedding procession was in progress down on the Rue St. Antoine only a block from the place where the fourth projectile burst at 8:17 in the morning. The bride, dressed in white, her train borne by two young girls and leaning on the arm of a proud poilu, decorated with the Croix de Guerre, descended the steps of the church near the corner of Rue St. Paul, and the procession passed down the street as though nothing more unusual than their wedding was taking place in the city. The nineteenth projectile fell on the Rue Riquet at 1:35. It struck a low building roofed with tile and glass. The force of the explosion destroyed all the glass and a large part of the tile but did little damage to the steel roof framework. The next, ten minutes later, fell within a stone boundary wall and high board fence along the Avenue Jean Jaures. It spent most of its energy in blasting out a hole about six feet in diameter and three feet deep in the soft earth. A shed near by was demolished and the baskets and boxes in it were strewn all about. No one was hurt.

There was an interval of an hour before the last projectile burst north of the city in Pantin, on the railway track about a quarter mile from the railway station. Within this hour the bells and bugles had sounded the "All's well," indicating the

probable end of danger. The noises of the city had been gradually increasing and the streets were busy again, so relatively few people heard the last explosion.

From 7:20 until 2:45, twenty-five projectiles had struck in and about Paris, killing sixteen people and wounding twenty-nine. A number of buildings had been demolished, and the business of one of the world's greatest cities had been brought to a standstill for an hour or two and demoralized for the remainder of the day. It would not be easy to picture this fully on the morrow to people all over the world, most of whom had never seen Paris and most of them likewise so far away from the war itself as to be totally ignorant of what war really meant.

If people in New York would imagine themselves looking up Broadway, at 43rd Street, with the street ablaze with light, and then conceive all those lights extinguished and the street lamps turned so low that one could not see the pavement, with pedestrians hurrying silently along as though the streets were dangerous places at night, with bomb dropping planes droning in the sky, then they would understand a little what the sound of the sirens meant to the Parisians. The Londoners knew a little; Zeppelins had taught them. And then if those familiar with New York would imagine themselves at the same place of a busy morning and conceive on the sounding of some general alarm that within ten minutes practically every moving thing on the streets as far as one could see in any direction would have disappeared or stopped, then they would understand a little, not much, what had happened on this morning, at 9:15, in Paris. Few, if any, not actually in the city, who had not felt the tension experienced by all so near the lines over the new offensive, the rack and wear on the nerves from the night raids and alarms, would ever really comprehend. There was no point to belittling the effect; it was real and tremendous, if but short lived. Life must go on even in the shadow of such menace however; so the city appeared to be functioning normally by evening. But the minds of the people

were not. So long as a city remains far enough from the lines or the enemy to be free of bombardment by cannon, its inhabitants retain a feeling of comparative security. But once it comes under the guns, a feeling akin to despair is apt to replace that of security. The exodus of people from the city, quietly encouraged by the police during the past few months, was certain to be greatly hastened.

A second communique was sent to the newspapers at four o'clock. This was displayed on their boards and set for the night and morning papers. It said: "The enemy fired on Paris with a long range gun starting at 8:00 A.M. At intervals of a quarter of an hour, shells of 240 millimeter calibre fell on the capital and its suburbs. There are about a dozen dead and about fifteen wounded. Measures are being taken to counter-shell the gun."

At 4:30, two hours after the bells and bugles had announced the end of the bombardment, the gendarmes found it necessary to force many people, who had remained in the subway stations for five or six hours, to leave. The effects of the emergency were many and differed greatly. Some people never sought shelter; many again took to the streets within an hour or so of the alarm. Some people ran to shelter in terror and many of them remained in the shelter all day. A few had to be compelled to leave. All transportation ceased and much of it was not resumed. A few stores did not close at all. Most stores remained closed till late afternoon. Midinettes were seen tripping along the streets, delivering parcels at midday, and weddings took place at times and places previously arranged, while houses were being demolished, people killed and wounded. Some factories released their employees and sent them home, afoot of course. And in the late afternoon of an almost perfect spring day, millions of Parisians finally shook themselves free of the memory of the previous night's raid alarm and the menace of the first day of the most spectacular bombardment of history, and hurried to their belated shopping and delayed tasks. They were fairly certain that in less

than six more hours they would be treated to another air raid if not a night bombardment. And they were not disappointed, for at 8:50 the sirens on the buildings and on fire trucks rumbling through the streets sounded another alarm. Planes had been heard passing over the lines at the Front. Towns and places of military importance nearer the Front were bombed instead of Paris, however, and at 10:10 the bugles and bells sounded the "All's well" again. All in all, a lovely day indeed!

A plotting on the maps in the Artillery office of the places where projectiles had burst during the day showed many interesting things. This plotting had been in progress all day and men of the Municipal Laboratory and the Artillery office had been busy gathering shell fragments and studying the scenes of destruction. Their reports were all in by evening. But little of this information would be given out and most of the people of the city would remain in ignorance of the places where the projectiles fell, the number, the extent of the damage, the casualties and the more vital details. But in the technical offices, particularly the artillery offices, work went on feverishly and the most painstaking studies were made. It was seen from the map as it had been plotted by late afternoon that twelve of the twenty-two or twenty-five shots (there was some uncertainty about this) had fallen in the general region of the Quai de Seine in the northeastern section of the city. Three fell close to the Seine on the north side, two more on the south side of the Seine within the walls, two entirely over the city, one of them in Chatillon and the other in Vanves, and one short of the city in Pantin. The distance from the shot in Pantin to that in Chatillon was more than eight miles. The twelve near the Quai de Seine were within a circle two miles in diameter. All of the shots were certainly distributed along a northeast line passing through the centre of the city.

Shortly after nine in the morning, when it seemed certain to the artillerists that the bombardment was by artillery, guns or a gun, and the guess was hazarded that this gun was located

in the Laon corner, possibly near Crepy, this information was telephoned to General Headquarters at Provins and to General Bourgeois who was in command of the sound ranging division of the French armies. He was instructed to set some of his thirty-two units along the Front at the work of locating the gun firing on Paris. They had no success during the morning, their instruments registering only a confusion of sounds. But they reported noticeably increased volumes of sound at somewhat the same intervals as those between explosions in Paris and these sounds came from the suspected region of Crepy. Many guns were firing at rather irregular intervals from the Laon corner.

The air reconnaissance service had also been busy and late in the day some observers returned with the report that all the area in the Laon corner was covered with a haze of smoke, surely from smoke pots, and that though they could not see anything clearly, it seemed that there were guns firing from some railway tracks near Crepy. They too reported increased volumes of sound at somewhat similar intervals to those recorded in Paris, though the area under suspicion was so well protected with anti-aircraft guns as to necessitate hasty work.

When all of this information had been assembled in the Artillery office late in the day, the officers there thought themselves justified, particularly in view of the extremity of the emergency, in concluding that the two curved tracks at Crepy photographed on March 6th housed the gun or guns. Something had to be done to stop the bombardment, and at once. Orders were therefore telephoned late in the evening to Group Commander Stapfer at Mont Notre Dame to detach a battery of his 305 mm. or 12 inch rifles on Batignolles railway carriages and start them at once for Vailly on the Soissons-Rheims railway. They were to be emplaced as quickly as possible on any available siding near Vailly and would begin firing at the earliest possible moment on the map point whose coordinates were 47 . 23. This was at the end of the shorter railway curve on the air photo of March 6th.

DEFECTION

FROM

"THE LAND OF THE CHILDREN" BY SERGEY GUSSIEV ORENBURGSKY
(*Translated by Nina Seliwanova*)

The days went by, the long hard days of life lived in the trenches. Months passed, and out of months grew years. Vavila had been to Prussian Galicia; he had been shifted with his comrades from one front to another until he was now a trained warrior. The science of warfare was not intricate. One had to sit all day and night in a hole in the midst of waste land, in the heat of the sun or in the rain, listening to the shriek of the shells and the whiz of the bullets, to which one had grown so accustomed that it seemed like the cawing of a crow or the song of a mosquito. At an order, one had to shoot; at an order, rush at the enemy or retreat to the deserted holes in the rear. What one thought was of no importance—thinking was unnecessary, the chiefs did all that. What tormented Vavila was the vermin; there wasn't an unbitten spot upon him, he was eaten up alive. But he grew used even to the lice. They infested everything, regardless of rank, they did not even spare the chiefs. Look at Koronin, how he was squirming!

Also, in the beginning, Vavila dreaded to see the dead and the maimed—sometimes a whole field was strewn with them,—but afterwards, he became hardened to this too. Didn't they slaughter hogs, sheep and chickens in the village? Well, here it was men, that was the only difference. At first he had also been afraid to fire his rifle. What if he should kill somebody? That, too, he got used to. Now he shot into space, not knowing if he killed anyone or not. He was told: "You must kill! What else did you go to war for?"

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But Vavila thought: "What did these men do to me? I have never seen any of them before."

However, if this was what was needed—the chiefs knew better than he did. The Czar had ordered him to fight, and no one asked his opinions. Still, he wondered. In Prussia he saw how well people lived, not at all like those in his village, but everything clean and orderly, so that the country looked like one continuous garden. Here Vavila came and here he destroyed, till farm, manor and city blazed. Thus it was ordered. Yet what if the Germans were to come and set Jhitniza on fire and plunder it, and burn his village? They, too, would in such a case be doing only what they were ordered to do. Vavila was puzzled. Men are alike, but here—the devil take it!

Strekotun filled his pockets and knapsack with all kinds of goods in Prussia. He stowed them away methodically and made money on them; he kept his money in a bag over his heart. Baba also had plundered, he had taken things; but he gave them away afterwards to his comrades and to girls he met in the towns back of the firing lines. Vavila was ashamed of gathering "the devil's gifts," as he said. Once he picked up a doll in the street. It had come from some rifled toy shop. It was beautifully dressed and it rolled its eyes as though it were alive. He thought, "The wife is expecting a baby soon, this will be of use." But in reality it was he who liked the doll, his wife had nothing to do with it. Then he shifted it from one hand to the other and gave it to the first little girl he met. He could not keep it.

"My conscience does not allow me to," he said.

Strekotun with his wooden jaws murmured:

"You haven't got over your ignorant stupidity." He laughed at Vavila. "Look around you: even the chiefs do it."

Vavila looked and saw plunder in full swing. A special phrase was coined: "Oh, we bought it in Prussia." A doctor sent home to Vinniza a whole carriage full of stolen things. Though the army was beaten and they had been sold out, the men came back loaded with bundles and packs.

"It isn't right!"

Vavila did not like it, but he could not say why. Neither did he like the war. The farther it went, the more there was of it. Plunder and murder and living in sin, but no way out, he was told. It must be, but why it should be, no one knew. A growing anxiety gnawed at his heart: he had ceased to believe in God. That is, he had not ceased to believe, he knew there was a God, but he had ceased to respect Him. Whenever a thunderstorm broke and lightning flashed, Vavila was actually amused.

"Lighting your pipe?" he would murmur, "You'd better light it down here . . . here, brother. You'd lose your pipe to be sure."

He looked up at the clouds but could no longer see there the kind-faced, grey-haired God, Who in bygone days had winked at him good-naturedly, as he puffed at His pipe. Yes, no matter how long you looked, you wouldn't see Him—He must be afraid lest He be struck in the forehead. Because it was no joke, this thing men had invented down here; it was not like lightning, but immeasurably worse. And Vavila thought if he were God he would have brought forth such a storm and blown such a gale over the earth, that it would have driven everybody home. "Stop your fighting. You've had your fun and that's enough now." One should be moderate.

But God was silent and man knew no moderation. For three years the war had been going on; nor was an end in sight, while men were continually inventing new devices with which they might more easily destroy their fellow men. Gas attacks, for instance. And Vavila saw in his imagination an old round tower like those he had seen in Prussia. In the tower sat a small man with an immense head, big as the room itself, and there he invented new tricks with which to destroy mankind . . . "It must be 'Bony-Never-Die' who plans all this, and Baba Yaga who helps him with magic herbs. Maybe all these guns and mortars are new kinds of were-wolves. Once perhaps they were men whom malicious sorcerers drugged with poisonous

herbs till they were enchanted into cast-iron monsters, and now they bellow and howl to the world about their evil fate."

Vavila was frightened by such thoughts. He also felt weary, disheartened, unable to understand what was happening to the world. When off duty, he would take out his flute; but that gave him no help either. The flute had forgotten how to sing, no matter how he tried; it only wept as though it longed for those places where the mermaids play in the sand and the kind old God puffs at His pipe. Vavila sighed and put the flute away. He listened to the talk among the soldiers.

The talk had become angry.

The soldiers from the rear brought bad tidings. Treachery was everywhere. There was a lack of ammunition. The Germans would start an attack, and either the Russians had no cartridges or else their bullets would not fit their guns. Had anything like it ever been heard of? The order was given to advance and the men had no rifles; they went forward to a mad death armed with sticks. They were tired of war, anyway. What was it for? Wasn't there also a rumor that the English alone would profit, while the Russians would gain nothing, and would lose hosts of men, dead or maimed, to no purpose? The Czarina was said to be pro-German. Let the Russians make peace, then. What was still worse, they'd taken a mujik into the palace, one Rasputin, a peasant from the province of Tobolsk, no better than another man, yet he ruled over all.

"Why didn't they choose me?" grumbled Strekotun. "I'd have taught them how to manage the Empire. I'm as good as that man any day."

Each would sit there for a while, with his own memories.

Anger at old injustices done them and their parents and grandparents came to the surface and was expressed without restraint. They were only careful that the officer on duty should not hear them swear—it was enough to take one's breath away. They made use of horrible expletives and ribaldry, entirely without provocation, simply because bitter malice was in them. In Vavila's platoon, there was a soldier by the name of Kara-

chunov, Karachun they called him; and Vavila had never seen such rancor in a man before. He was black-haired, with a spiteful twist to his lips and dull, glowering eyes; even his grey tunic seemed to bristle with wrath. In speaking, Karachun was always obscene. Perhaps he was bragging or perhaps he wanted to pick a quarrel.

"My mother was a whore, she got together with a Tartar and I was what came of it. Did I ask her to bring me into the world? The Tartar left her and went to work in a factory. The priest would not let her kiss the cross at church. 'You're unclean,' he said, 'and your whelp is unclean . . .' meaning me . . . Ha-ha! I beat the priest. She was drowned by the peasants in the pond. 'You're a witch,' they said. 'You sent a plague on the cattle.' She had such white hands and she was small and white as a dumb ewe lamb. I've never see a woman like her. . . .

"I set fire to the village from both ends and went away. In town, I sought my father in the factory. 'Why did you bring me into the world in such a way?' I said. I beat him like the scoundrel he was . . . then I went rambling about the world. I was a free man. But then, damn them, they took me for a soldier. . . ."

Karachun would look askance at his comrades with his small sharp lynx eyes, as though trying to find out if they were laughing at him.

"Don't you rogues think yourselves better than I am; we're of the same breed. When Khan Mamay and his tribes beat us and ruled Russia, the Tartars took your greatgrandmothers. You all have Tartar blood. And when there were serfs, the landowners helped themselves to your grandmothers and you have their vile noble blood into the bargain. So you're a slavish tribe—you're no good and you never will be! You ought to be killed off to the last man so a new race could spring from something else. . . . Your last woman should mate with a tiger . . . Damn you . . ."

And Karachun spat wrathfully.

The soldiers listened in silence; they were afraid of him. If someone said something he did not like, he reached for his knife or his bayonet. Once, when Koronin reprimanded him, he yelped and bared his teeth like a wolf. But the officer stood calmly before him, looking him straight in the eye. Karachun's glance fell. He returned to his place, grumbling:

"We'll meet again somewhere. I'll get you yet."

Vavila listened to his cursing and wondered. The world was different—a terrible place, all shadow and darkness; there was no light and he could see no path. Men were all rascals, ready to be bought, slaves who licked the master's hands; their clay heads should be smashed and the pieces thrown on the dunghill. The masters also, chiefs and merchants, they belonged to the Evil One, and they too should be smashed. Their rule had lasted long enough. They had grabbed all the world: everything belonged to them, sky and earth, river and sea; and they had befouled everything, scoundrels that they were; they had made a brothel and a cesspool of the world. They should be beaten and thrown into a stinking pit.

Karachun ground his teeth.

"Ha! If I could get the power in my hands, I'd show them all! They'd know me; I'd set fire to Russia from the four ends. I'd burn them to a cinder, the swine. Maybe some good would come of it."

"You can't set up heaven on earth by setting earth on fire," cautioned Strekotun.

"What do I care? Let it be hell on earth . . . only so men would be real devils with sharp teeth and rule the land with a firm hand . . . But you . . . you crawling race . . . you make me sick."

Strekotun murmured under his breath: "That isn't good husbandry!"

Strekotun liked to talk about husbandry. He was a farmer from head to toe, he was therefore more rancorous than the others; and for that reason, too, the war was more loathsome to him. For years now they had been burning and ravaging

the land. Who would have to build it again? The peasant, of course. He longed for his hut, for his wife, for his yellow cat. He spoke of his chickens, recalling the color of each one, as though they were eternal. And he swore the foulest oaths with zest.

"You'll come back from the war," he would grumble, "and find it just as crowded. You won't be able to turn around, no room . . ."

Strekotun had his own idea of room. It wasn't that he would like to look at immensity and cry out for joy in a long breath, "Oh, how wonderful it is!" No, Strekotun liked to be able to touch everything, to walk around with an axe in his hand and to measure things. For him the sky existed only when it rained or when the sun was scorching. The forest set him to calculating how many boards and beams could be made of the trees and where they could be used. His was a wooden world, made of boards roughly planed but thriftily placed together. And God in this world was a wooden idol, standing in a corner, because it was set up thus by his forefathers.

"God?—That's all right, but you must help yourself. If you've been careless, who'll answer for it? Not God, certainly. What concern of God's is it? He lives like a landowner. He has His estate and rules all over the earth where He has churches with bells."

Such was Strekotun's philosophy. He could not imagine a world where there would be no holdings and no worry about land. God—the landowner—lived well. The saints and angels and the priests worked for Him; therefore He had a justice and a law of His own, a landowner's rule of which the priest used to say: "Patience brings everything about." But how long should you have patience? Hadn't the peasants been patient enough, suffering as they had suffered, they and their fathers and grandfathers? Patience could not endure forever; it was time for it to end, we must begin to live according to our own justice.

His justice was that of the husbandman.

"Our stock wasn't any good and that's why we lived so badly. That's enough. Now, when the war is over, we'll change it. If only the people would agree among themselves—whoever works would get the land . . . As for the idlers and loafers, landowners and their kind . . ."

Strekotun would grow green in the face at the thought of them. Then he would burst into such passionate imprecations that even Baba felt uncomfortable. For Strekotun was a past master at swearing. He would pile up out of such words not merely a three or four story house, but a towering skyscraper. Though Baba was by no means averse to profanity, he used it not angrily but humorously to amuse the crowd. But lately Baba had sunk into apathy. He had lost his heart to a Polish girl, beautiful as a picture. She lived in Belostok and he was wasting away in longing for her.

"As soon as the war is over, I'll marry her," he would say without preface. "I'll tell you, boys, I'd marry her if only the war would end."

And everybody sighed thinking: "If only the war would end . . . I am tired of it . . ."

Vavila also sighed: he did not know why, but probably from melancholy. He took no part in the soldiers' talk; it flowed past him. What was it all about anyway? The peasants always spoke that way about the land, but it all belonged to the noblemen. It had been so arranged; what was the good of talking? Take the war, for instance. The peasants knew there was nothing in it for them but death or wounds, yet when they were ordered to fight, they fought and did not dare to run. Then take the vermin. They weren't needed at all, but no matter how you swore, they didn't care.

Thoughts made Vavila restless. Why did they attach themselves to him, why was he entangled in them like a rooster caught in the wheat? Where did the war come from, who caused the war and what was the use of it? Why was he sent here to fight without being asked if he would, he and the rest of them? Who planned it so? But whether one thought or not,

one could find no answer. Why was he so confused, too? Such thoughts were like a gas cloud, they suffocated Vavila. And to add to all this, in the sector they occupied things had been quiet. The second week they did not move; the days were long and the nights still longer.

Vavila walked about the slope. He could not sleep. The earth was strewn with shells. In places an arm was thrust up from the ground, in others the top of a head appeared, covered with hair. Now that he was used to it, it was like living in a cemetery, waiting for your own turn. Tomorrow you would either be torn by shrapnel or buried under an avalanche of earth. Well, what was the difference? You would die just the same at home, lying on the shelf above the stove when your time had come. But to kill a man—that was dreadful! Why you killed him, heaven only knew. You received an order and you killed. The enemy were ordered to kill too. They ran upon you, disembowelled you, and that was all there was to it. Who could understand it? The devil alone. How tiresome it was! Vavila walked about trying to remember something he had forgotten.

“Confound them all!” he exclaimed.

He would stop still, looking at the moon. He looked and thought: “What is it? It is round and gives light and moves in the sky as if it were alive. Look, there it goes now plunging through the clouds.” Once Vavila aimed his rifle at the moon and shot at it, raising the alarm. Afterwards he was sorry. “What did I do it for?” Then the thought came: “A bullet travels no more than a mile and it must be much further to the moon, the moon must be unaware of this shot.”

After that, the round orbit pricked his curiosity. Why did it wander about the sky all night? Why did the sun shine by day? Vavila tried to look up at the sun but he could not bear it. Sure enough, it was burning hot; the moon was no match for it. It would be better if there were neither sun nor moon, but only the stars in the sky. That would be fine, always dark, so no one could fight then! Where was No Man’s Land? How

could anyone find it in the darkness? Who could tell where their lines began and where the enemy's ended? Recently, in a night alarm, they had shot their own men, killing a number of them. Only, he thought again, it would be tiresome to have night always. There you are: man is never satisfied. And what was it all for? Who made it?

Here Vavila remembered: God made it all.

If it was God, then the matter was beyond man's understanding. The priest should know best about it then. "When he comes to say Mass, I'll ask him," Vavila decided.

So when the regimental priest arrived, wearing a calotte over his grey hair, Vavila accosted him.

"What did God make the world for?" he asked.

The priest who was deaf, put his hand to his ear and asked in a weak voice, "What did you say, friend? I can't hear you."

"I mean why did God . . ."

"What about God?"

"All this . . . the moon, the sun, the stars . . . for what purpose were they made?"

The priest smiled, "You've grown tall enough, son, but you are a fool. Who can know God's mind, except God Himself? Better come and kiss the cross."

Vavila kissed the cross.

But he thought to himself: "The priest does not know. Therefore no one knows." He shook his head. "Ah, if one could only know!"

Life seemed so tedious that he wanted to shut his eyes. Besides, a bewildering force within Vavila tormented him and demanded outlet. As soon as the evening star shone in the sky, all the soldiers on the front suffered in the same way. In their rest periods, it moved them to race about like infuriated bulls, with bloodshot eyes, drinking and brawling until dawn. Vavila stuck his head in the snow in winter, or sat in dirty puddles in the summertime, something within him keeping him from following the ways of the others. But once, he too broke loose, and charged about like a bull, crushing and trampling upon all that

stood before him, dead or alive, friend or foe. There was no earth or sky—only a mist, in crimson tatters, hanging before his eyes. It burned and scorched him.

Somewhere nearby, Baba sang, playing with all ten fingers on the accordion, at the same time pouring more liquor into Vavila's glass with tender solicitude. Something in Vavila urged him to dance, something heavy moved his feet, beat them to the floor in the intricate figure of the dance, flung them into the air. Then suddenly a quarrel with a fellow-soldier arose, over some pink and doll-like creature. Somehow a knife was in Vavila's hand. Karachun had slipped it there at the right moment; he stood by Vavila, baring his teeth, like a wolf.

"Strike him!"

And it seemed as though thousands of voices took up the cry and filled the purple mist, hissing:

"Strike! Strike!"

Here and there, through the mist, Karachun's face floated before his eyes. Like a devil it leaped about, while Baba was trying to get hold of Vavila's hand. Suddenly tears dimmed his sight and there was nothing around him but a white cloud . . . he let the knife fall and began to weep. For a long time he wept, first on Baba's shoulder, then on that of the soldier he had almost killed. His tears seemed to him like a shining river upon which he was floating. . . . Afterwards the three rambled together in the mist . . . and Vavila dreamed a dream. A grey-haired man in a white shirt with a small ikon on his breast chased him through a dense forest, trying to beat him with a stick. That forest stretched out for a thousand versts and Vavila had run all through it but the old man was still chasing him.

Next day Vavila was unable to hold his head up. He struck his rifle with his fist . . . "I'll never do it again . . . never again." The transparent flame that lived in him was blown out. He did not know what the flame was, neither did he understand what force had been busy with him.

Baba was taken to the field hospital, suffering from a slight

attack of venereal disease. He came back soon; it was curable. But others were shipped off to the capitals, trainloads of men, rotting alive. Once the Czarina came to such a train—an oversight on the part of the officials. Dressed as a Red Cross nurse and accompanied by her daughters, she walked to one soldier and asked him what was the matter with him, and he in his simplicity blurted out the plain truth. Since then trains carrying such patients were no longer sent to the capitals, but taken off to remote little towns. And later the diseased men went home.

For a long time something loathsome ate at Vavila's heart; something worse than vermin fed upon him; he could not understand whence it came.

He would thrust his head out of the trench: "If only a bullet would finish me."

But when it came, the bullet brought joy in its train.

It was a stray bullet, coming from heaven knows where. In all the battles through which he had been, he had never been wounded, though there were forty holes in his coat. And now a bullet whizzing from nowhere, cut through Vavila's leg and sank in Koronin's arm. They took the officer to the hospital on a stretcher, but Vavila walked there. They washed the wound and bandaged it; he was laid into a soft bed and drowsiness came upon him. He saw the mounds and the hillsides of his childhood, the peaceful country, the mermaids playing on the sand, and above all the grey-haired God looking down through the clouds, smoking and winking lovingly.

Vavila smiled and opened his eyes. Something transparent flashed across them, like a beam of light slanting through the air. At the head of his bed sat a nurse in a white headdress, looking like a saint. She was gazing at him with maternal anxiety. Her lips and smile were like a child's and she herself was like a little girl, timid and shy. Vavila stared at her, not daring to move, lest the vision fade.

Her slender hands deftly arranged the blanket; she bent over him in solicitude.

"Does it hurt?"

She was like the God in the clouds, that looked down at him, inclining His head, only younger. After that, Vavila never lost sight of the girl. He watched her walk with her swift, short step. He turned his head on the pillow, following her with his eyes. When she went out of the room, he waited for her return, half-rising from his pillow. At night he woke to peer through the surrounding dimness. Was she there? His life flowed forth in a light cloudy dream. He did not speak to the girl; he only looked and looked; he only listened to the sound of her hands as they touched him. All his life was like a dream; he was afraid of waking. He was recovering rapidly and he thought to himself, "Soon I'll go away and she won't exist any more."

"What's your name, sister?"

"Tatiana . . . Tanichka . . ."

Lying in bed he whispered: "Ta-ni-chka!"

She bent over him with a smile. His heart suddenly leapt up within him and he dropped into a limpid, azure abyss.

"Tanichka . . . I love you . . ." he said.

Then his face became purple and he was afraid.

Tanichka drew back frightened. Her child's face grew serious and on guard. But it was not for long. Presently she blushed and smiled tenderly.

"What is your name?"

"Vavila."

Vavila faltered. It seemed to him he had pronounced a word that was gross and revolting. But she was speaking, leaning towards him.

"Do you want me to be a sister to you, Vavila?"

"A little sister . . ." Vavila rejoiced. His heart exulted. At once he felt better. "I haven't ever had a sister."

He placed his large hand on his breast and said in a loud whisper:

"I can go away now . . . I'll carry you like an ikon on my heart, you . . ."

He looked at her and couldn't take his eyes away.

"Forever . . . you . . ."

She stooped and kissed him gently on the brow.

Vavila's soul was immersed in a dream in which the image of Tanichka took shape and was enshrined in him forever. He started to tell her some of his best tales. Instantly she became absorbed; presently she rushed out, returning, and, brought back a copy-book and a pencil.

"Wait, I'll take it down. I never heard such tales. Where did you learn them?"

Vavila smiled broadly.

"God knows where they came from. They must have drifted along to me with the wind."

"Wait. Tell me the story again about the malicious mujik who was turned into a big gun."

She listened, looking at him with starry eyes, thinking secret thoughts. Once in the night she whispered—a mysterious, barely audible whisper.

"Do you know about the Social-Revolutionists party?"

"I am illiterate," smiled Vavila regretfully.

"Now listen—don't tell a living soul about this talk. Tomorrow you will be discharged; when you're back at the Base, come and see me some Sunday. Come alone. I will introduce you to some people who may be useful to you. But we can't talk here. The walls have ears."

Vavila was unlike himself after his discharge. He neither heard nor saw anything, he lived continually in his iridescent dream. Two weeks later, when they returned to the rear, he rushed to the hospital.

"Tanichka?"

"Sister Tanichka is no longer here," he was told. "She asked to be transferred to an ambulance-train; she went on it to Moscow. Your officer Koronin was sent there, too."

Vavila slapped his coat miserably with both big hands. He walked out on the square, flung his cap on the ground and stood there for a long time, staggering as if drunk. Baba saw

him from a distance and drew near. He looked into his face, then without a word led him quietly away. Baba was intuitive; his insight came from the heart, but he understood in his own way and spoke puzzling words.

"Whether you jump or not, you can't leap over. Love is not like a potato, you can't throw it out of the window."

He knew by experience; although he had forgotten his Polish girl, he was now pining away for a Czecho-Slovakian belle.

For a long time Vavila lived unconscious of what was going on about him. Meanwhile something strange and incomprehensible was happening. A sense of alarm came out of the blue and took possession of the men. For some days no newspapers came from Petrograd. The authorities rode to conferences at a furious pace, the orderlies hurried past by car and on horseback. Fantastic rumors spread in a dread, awesome way. People said there was a revolution in Petrograd and fighting in the streets. The Czar had hastened from the front to the capital, he was drawing troops around it. Others said there was no longer a Czar.

The front was hushed and waited in suspense.

THE BLACK BEAST

FROM

"THE CASE OF SERGEANT GRISCHA" BY ARNOLD ZWEIG

(*Translated by Eric Sutton*)

Grischa sat at table eating: he was eating a beefsteak and roast potatoes, and on the table was a tin of preserved fruit. He was drinking half a bottle of red wine. Sergeant-Major Spierauge had sent him three cigars, two of which he had given away, one to Corporal Schmielinsky and the other to Corporal Sacht, to smoke as soon as he was allowed tobacco. Grischa had the third in his mouth. He was going to cut the end off and light it, ready at any moment for the black beast, the fear of death, to leap upon him from the corner. He must keep it off. A soldier was going to his death, by God, a Russian Sergeant, Grischa Iljitch Paprotkin, Knight of the Cross of St. George, alone among a horde of enemies, exposed to the eyes of everyone; and he must go like a man. In spite of all he had eaten there still remained between his palate and his tongue a bitter taste he could not get rid of. The cigar was a good one: it drew and tasted well; but he had to smoke it with set jaws, as his heart was pounding so slowly and so heavily. The door of the cell was open. He would be alone long enough; he would get plenty of sleep, too, if sleep it could be called. Now he must see and hear and breathe; his fingers which he kept lying on the table or stuck in his pockets were continually in motion. They felt the lining of his pockets, and the ribbed surface of the deal table, so rough and pleasant to his touch. His eyes could see the golden light of noon pouring through the window, indeed it was past noon. He saw the spiders' webs on the ceiling, and the winter-flies of Russia—several were buzzing and

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flying sluggishly along the window-pane, and they reminded him of overfed crows. They were safe enough.

Grischa remembered that he was still wearing his woollen waistcoat which he did not want spoilt. He took it off, drawing it over his head, and then put on his tunic again. Grischa's back felt cold, and he quickly buttoned up his tunic. His head felt hot, so he took off his cap. He felt impelled to walk up and down. From the chair under the window to the cell door by the passage was exactly seven paces, and with bent head, as if he were quite alone, he paced them up and down. He still felt cold. He drew on his overcoat, the good warm Russian cloak. Then the desire to empty his bowels came over him, so he went to the corporal who sent a man with him. He liked the sound of his footsteps echoing upwards from the stone flags. The snow in the yard crunched deliciously under his hob-nailed boots, and the keen blue air felt refreshing against his temples and his nostrils. It is pleasant to sit on a latrine and empty oneself out. All that makes the living man is good, he thought, as he clenched his teeth and wiped away the sweat that burst out on his forehead though it was winter and very cold. It would not last much longer. Then he went back accompanied by the Landwehr man with his rifle. That heavy weight upon his knees had gone. He walked back to his cell much comforted: he felt better now. Next he wanted to wash his face: he was determined to be clean. Hot water takes away the dirt from a man's hands and the skin of his face. The coarse soap, which looks like a soft brown stone, did not lather but it rubbed the dirt off. Anyhow, it would clean him, he thought. Then he asked for the barber—he wanted to be shaved. Erwin Scharski, the company barber, a soldier like the rest, could report in three minutes from the quarters of the first platoon. Grischa was sitting among the South German Landwehr men. They were smoking and reading: two games of nap and a game of chess were going on. It was very silent compared with the usual clatter at that hour. The long tunnel-like room was full of a murmurous hum of talk. With a towel round his neck, pleas-

antly sprinkled with hot water, lathered with almond soap, Grischa sat with closed eyes—his twilight was upon him. Now that he was being shaved no one could come to fetch him. As long as this business lasted his life was safe. At the moment he had a craving for sleep: but he must be shaved first, and he listened to the barber's gossip while he was stropping the razor.

"I'll put on my St. George's Cross," thought Grischa. "I'll take it out of the pocket of my tunic and hang it on my overcoat: afterwards they can send it back to the Tsar. I hope it may be a reproach to him all his days that he did not keep the peace or come to his senses earlier."

The barber was telling him about the huge rats which they had had in their lines in Champagne, how they were as big as squirrels, nearly as big as cats. But when he came to the point of the story, when the rats with the poison in their bellies lay on their backs with their four paws drawn up, forty-one of them in a single trench, he stopped short. He suddenly hated the idea of these rats lying there so stiff and he grew dizzy at the thought. He was telling the story for the seventeenth or perhaps the seventy-seventh time, but this was the first time he told it with a happy ending. This time the rats smelt the poison and generously left it alone. Grischa smiled, and then let himself be shaved. His skin was now smooth, his hair brushed and parted neatly in the way that soldiers like to have it. The cost of the performance would go down to the office account. The barber would not take Grischa's money. And the soldier, the man of the Landwehr into whom, when his work was done, he so obviously changed back again, shook his customer by the hand and disappeared. As he crossed the yard he heard an unknown clear voice outside:

"Section, halt! Order arms! At ease!"

Something struck at his heart, and he ran into his quarters. A clerk brought in an order to Corporal Schmielinsky; the corporal went as white as a sheet, and his lips trembled in his agitation; then he went in to Grischa, who had just lain down

for a moment, though a moment before he had got up because he was tired of lying down.

"Comrade," said Schmielinsky, "it has come. Try and keep calm, old boy."

Grischa felt the sensation of a blow that made his heart leap. And he too went pale. The two men stared at each other. Then Grischa made the movements of buckling up his belt: he would not go forth in slovenly and unsoldierly guise, and he mechanically felt for the broad, once black, infantry belt which had been returned to him with the rest of his possessions, and which he had not yet given away, and buckled it round him. Then he adjusted his cloak in the correct folds over his back, smoothed it down in front, put on his cap, his broad peaked Russian summer cap made of thin linen, straightened himself with a jerk, saluted in the Russian manner (not permitted to German soldiers), and said good-bye to the corporal:

"If it's time, then I must go. Thank you, comrade."

The corporal on duty blew his nose, his arms shook, and for an instant his handkerchief covered his eyes.

A breathless stillness fell upon the room. The guards, who had come in from outside, stood at attention. Grischa, standing on the threshold, looked once more around him: the windows above the long table, the stools on which the chess-players sat motionless and stared across at him, the two groups of nap-players, who let their cards fall, men washing, who ceased to wash, and two men sewing, who let their needles and their garments drop, the bunks with their straw mattresses and haversacks.

"All correct," he thought. "Section, march!"

"I wish you good luck, comrades!"

The Germans made no sound, except for a young soldier, pale, and with eyes starting from his head, who answered him hoarsely: "Keep your heart up, comrade, and good-bye," and another, near him, whispered unintelligible words of horror from where he lay upon his bunk.

"Hurry up," came a voice from without.

Grischa felt slightly dizzy: but with chin well out, he marched with the corporal on duty and two Landwehr men past the sentry at the gate. There waited two sergeant-majors on horseback: Spierauge on a fat lethargic mare, and Berglechner, spruce as an officer, on a dark brown gelding. Four files of four men each, all in the same green uniforms, wearing puttees and steel helmets, carbines on their shoulders—there they stood, Jägers of this machine-gun company, ready for the march.

"But the fellow's arms are free," Berglechner called out to his friend from the office.

Spierauge shrugged his shoulders. It was not really necessary to bind Grischa's hands, he said. But Berglechner was punctilious, and without saying a word, Grischa put his hands behind his back and allowed Corporal Schmielinsky, whose hands were still trembling, to tie a narrow strip of leather round his wrists.

"That'll make me stand up," he thought. "I must stick my chest out with my arms behind my back." And with hard, steady eyes he looked at the horseman, whose voice and manner was quite different from that of the Germans whom he had known hitherto—middle-aged men with their experiences behind them. Then he looked the young Jägers up and down: cool, keen-eyed fellows, he thought. Two files in front of him and two behind, and Grischa in the middle,—and the little procession moved off. The two sergeant-majors started their horses. Berglechner took the lead, and Spierauge was to have ridden behind: but Berglechner would not allow it, he wanted company and conversation, so the leisurely old Liese had to move up to the front. Berglechner, who had already reported to Rittmeister von Brettschneider, took command: "Section, march!" and the detachment began to tramp rhythmically through the squelching slush of the main street. They went round the Tverskaia, and through outlying quarters of the city.

Grischa gazed straight ahead. The lower edges of the line

of helmets in front of him gave the impression of a long grey shield swaying slightly as it moved forward. The men's leather straps and belts, gleaming with fresh buff polish, their puttees, their worn green trousers, their laced boots, so carefully greased, and on an exact level above the helmets the four muzzles of the rifles, and beyond them another four, now visible and now hidden as the heads of the marching men behind them rose and fell. The place for executions at Mervinsk was well known. It lay outside the town, in an easterly direction, on the way to that fortified outlook known as "Lychow's bunion." Years ago it had been a gravel quarry, scooped out of the hillside, and its steep wall offered an excellent background for shooting, and there was a fairly level stretch of ground on which the men could be drawn up. Veressejeff had a sleigh waiting in front of his house so that if the priest, unhappy man, should still come, he could drive to the place at once. Spierauge, who also had the subject in mind, thought that the clergyman, whoever he might be, would not join them till they were outside the town: but at that moment Sergeant-Major Pont appeared, helmeted and gloved, wearing an artillery cloak with three ribbons; he rode up casually and saluted. He introduced himself briefly and the two others raised their gloved hands to the rims of their helmets. At a slow trot they overtook the little party, which of course had not halted; Pont took up the rear and the two others rode ahead. Some civilians were sauntering up and down the pavements enjoying the afternoon sun, and they were splashed with the flying slush as the men tramped marching with extreme smartness and precision. The two sergeant-majors felt like officers; they stared straight before them over their horses' ears, seeing no one. Murmurs and whispered talk followed them along the Magazinstrasse. Women crossed themselves at the roadside and all the passers-by stared aghast at the solitary Russian with his hands bound behind him, and the St. George's Cross on his chest. As yet nobody knew much about him; but his journey along that humble street of warehouses was to make

him known and famous before evening in Mervinsk, and many families—Jews, Catholics, and Orthodox Russians—would learn every detail of his fate. Newspapers were unknown there, but news was passed all the more eagerly from mouth to mouth.

Grischa went forward, took his eyes off the unbearable steel-grey line in front of him and the tiny black mouths of the gun-barrels, and let his gaze wander to the houses on the right and left, where lived his friends, who could not help him. He filled his lungs with deep draughts of air. In some marvellous manner, he no longer felt the presence of that fear that had so lately threatened to destroy him. He looked about him and saw all that stood upon the earth.

The shop-signs, on which men announced what wares lay stored for sale in the caverns behind them. The openings to these same caverns, four-square windows with wooden frames and cross-pieces and little double sashes, moss-grown at the joints. The doorsteps, wooden balks or slabs of stone, smooth and worn with many steps. He saw the smoke rising like pale pennons from the chimneys, melting snow pouring in little torrents from every roof, or falling from the eaves in golden drops; he saw how the wind blew when they had left the last houses behind them. Every step seemed to jerk him violently onward; over that white road, monotonously clanked and tramped a moving body, composed of several members, each of which was itself a man. Embedded in this complex creature, his hands behind his back, his legs mechanically moving, marched in a long buff cloak, the solitary soldier. At last he saw the snowfields, white or pale gold, flecked with bluish shadows. Perhaps the business of this day was a mad business, but if so it was being done with such solemnity and so much as a matter of course, that Grischa alone perceived a little of its madness. His wild eyes wandered to the right and left of him; there was nothing new to see, nothing but crows, snow-drifts, and the dazzling shimmer of the sun's bright golden

pathway, before the haze dispersed and gathered into the blue canopy above their heads.

"O God," he thought, "O God." The only thing that comforted him was the feel of his broad leather belt round his middle which kept him stiff and erect. Pride, sad splendid liar, that forced him to preserve his honour in the face of his enemies by a brave death in a far country, was like that belt of his: it too held him together. He kept on swallowing saliva that he noticed had a bitter taste, and while his gaze wandered from left to right, marking all the details of that scene, just below his heart he felt a steady pressure thrusting the overstrained muscle against the vaulting of his ribs. The horses' harness clinked and there was much rattling of chains against leather; the soldiers' heavy laced boots, sixteen pairs of them, crunched in unison into the snow that now began to grow harder, their bayonets beat rhythmically against their thighs and on their shoulders the rifles creaked on the leather straps, sometimes knocking sharply against the steel helmets. This marching body made its own peculiar noises, and had a heart that was full of fear; that heart was Grischa.

The young soldiers strode forward, some with serious, others with different expressions; they were talking in low tones. The little column was the only eminence in that flat, rolling plain; upon it the road stretched away into the distance and cut into its surface like a shallow ravine. Against that glittering scene the soldiers' cloaks looked olive-green, and their faces a deep red, much darker than they really were. They were marching out to execute a spy: that was what they had been told. And this was one of the most solemn duties of a soldier. Not till they were coming back, would they light their pipes or cigarettes, talk and laugh, and wave to the women, carrying five bullets less. At the moment they were the very incarnation of discipline as they marched forward with a steady, swinging step. The two horses in front sent up a faint steam of sweat. Liese tactlessly raised her tail before Spierauge noticed it. The soldiers behind her made indignant grimaces and turned their

heads aside. Sergeant-Major Berglechner called his colleague's attention to it, and Spierauge drove his heels into the flanks of the fat old creature, and pulled her in to the side of the road.

The little party moved forward: the form of it was oddly symmetrical—narrow at the head, then broadening and narrowing alternately—four files of four men each, a solitary figure in the centre, two horsemen in front and one in the rear. This last horseman, Sergeant-Major Pont, sat meditatively in the saddle. As with all the others the chin-strap of his helmet was drawn tight across his cheeks. But he was the only one of them who realized the martial value of the chin-strap and what many feelings it helped to inspire. All that was distinctive and noteworthy in this game of soldiering he saw before his eyes, and even embodied in himself: war and make-believe, the moving body in front of him, the group soul, if so it can be called, adventure, courage, the solemnity of an official act that was costing a man his life. From his point of vantage he could look over the two files in front of him and their rifles and see Grischka marching with his shoulders drawn back: (but Grischka alone knew how blue with cold his hands were, and cramped and twisted in their leather strap). An infinite pity for that poor, brave, lonely figure, that ragged Russian, brought back from the depths of his unconscious memory a feeling that a tribune was riding here, and that tribune was himself, Laurentius Pontus, riding behind his cohort, on service somewhere in the mighty Empire, German mercenaries marching to his death some rebel against the Imperial law, symbolized perhaps by Hadrian's or Trajan's bust, some hairy Sarmatian, scowling Scythian, laughing Samogetian, or dark, fanatical Jew. That low, white, rolling plain might just as well be white sand or white snow, or again the white lime dust of Galilee or Gaul: and the unchanging nature of man—at least over such short periods as two thousand years—made his heart heavy.

Suddenly they turned off from the main road. Grischka, like a beast lashed by an invisible whip, tossed his head helplessly from right to left, for this parting of the ways made it too

horribly clear that the irrevocable place was near at hand. His breath came heavily as though, within his breast, water was contracting into ice. They had reached the rising ground, and after passing a clump of elder, a black and tangled mass of stems and leaves, they came upon a bend in the road, and followed some wheel-ruts into a sunken track, where a grey cart with two half-starved grey horses, and a lumpish Posener peasant lad in uniform, had drawn to the side; near by at the entrance to the gravel quarry, a man on a horse in a grey and purple cloak, with a felt hat turned up on the left side, and the brim hanging down on the right like an African rough-rider, a great silver cross hung round his neck, and a puffy, red-cheeked impatient countenance, the man of God sat waiting. Events now moved forward with incredible rapidity, like a torrent rushing down a mountain-side. Grischa, confronted by this lofty yellow-grey wall, spattered with snow, and by the young medical officer, Dr. Lubbersch, who was stamping up and down smoking a cigarette; and in the presence of the long narrow box covered with two tarpaulins, this last grim preparation for the end, Grischa realized that until now he had never quite believed that his last moment would really come; he had thought of it all as somehow hardly serious, though in his heart he knew it must be so. Fortunately for him, the last few minutes sped in rushes towards the end. He tried to tear at the straps that bound him, and he opened his mouth to cry out, but an inner power, engrafted in his soul these hundreds of years ago, forced his wrenching fingers to relax and rub themselves together as though for warmth, and stifled his shriek into a gasp for air. Only the despairing glitter of his watery-blue, wandering eyes above his high cheek-bones betrayed his agony. Luckily, Sergeant-Major Berglechner thoroughly understood such functions: he had had much experience in Serbia and Ruthenia where he had begun his service in the Archduke Frederick's command.

"Pity to spoil a good cloak," he said to Spierauge, who

did not in the least know what were the proper steps, as his office regulations did not cover such performances.

One of the Jägers untied Grischa's hands. Grischa smiled gratefully at him and swung his arms against his chest to warm himself. Meanwhile the man of God had begun to recite the prayers for the dead in Latin, which Grischa did not understand; he said them into Grischa's face, honestly troubled for this poor soul, who was going to damnation, and appealing for the grace of Christ, who died on the Cross for the salvation of even this ignorant Russian, although the apostasy and schisms of His Church seemed likely to put something of a strain on God's goodness. He recited the prayers in a sonorous sing-song. Grischa felt very impatient and would have turned his head away from him, but the silver cross hypnotized him for the seconds it took the soldiers to unhook his belt, unbutton his cloak, and strip it off his shoulders; next they took off his tunic and his arms were free for a moment as he stood there in his patched and threadbare grey flannel shirt. High above him towered the semicircle of the stony crumbling wall of the gravel quarry. The path in front of him was now barred. There stood, drawn up in a line, five men, with their rifles at the ready, terrible to look upon, and waiting for a brief word of command. These were the green cloaks and red faces of his destroyers. Grischa stood helpless and forsaken: a crushing weight lay on his throbbing heart, and he cast a wild, fluttering glance past the elder bushes, and watched the sluggish course of a crow flying upwards into the distance, where the town lay hidden below him, that town so full of living men. Sergeant-Major Pont set his teeth, pulled out his handkerchief, and in a quiet matter-of-fact tone that admitted of no question he ordered one of the Jägers to blindfold the prisoner. The priest went on with his muttered ministrations. Now Grischa stood once more with his hands bound and his arms tightly secured. He was terribly helpless now; he could not struggle, he could only groan. He had already almost lost consciousness. The tremendous crushing weight of this thing that was being done

to him, and the thought that it was being done without pause or protest, or the least sign of mercy, clouded Grischka's mind. He wanted to beg that he might not be bound or shot, but he could not find the German words to express his anguish, not the Russian words either: all he could think of were the words "Mother, Mother," that came unconsciously to his lips. Then the world was hidden by a soft clean-smelling piece of linen. And within him, ready to spring, crouched that nameless fear, the awful shuddering terror of the black beast, and he stood up tense and stiff with horror, listening for the dreadful sounds that must soon rend his ears. In that instant, as the last order but one suddenly rang out, and he heard the rattle of the rifles brought up to the men's shoulders, the litany came to an end.

The Cross, he thought, was turned towards him, that ponderous hewn symbol was being raised to his unseeing eyes. Then, in that moment when Sergeant-Major Berglechner rapped out the sharp command "Fire!" the certainty of death and the extremity of his terror conquered; his soul burst its bonds, and in the same instant his bowels were loosened. The crack of the shots was like a sudden senseless blow shattering a panorama of hurrying pictures in his mind, beginning with the cross in his mother's kitchen at home. He saw Aljoscha with the wire-cutters, the moonlit expanse of the forest camp as he cut through the wires, he smelt the acrid smell of the car in which he had escaped, of the hay in the car next to him when he left the train, the vast white, icy silence of the winter forest, the shuddering loneliness of the deserted artillery position, and there was the black beast creeping towards him, the lynx with her pointed brush-like ears and devilish face, longing to leap upon him and tear him down, yet fleeing in terror at his laughter, his exulting freedom, and the snowball that he threw at her. Once more, now weak and forlorn, he smiled at the beast as she leapt upon him from the five muzzles of the rifle-barrels—this time he knew that she would tear him down. But his sense of life, which had long been broken and

effaced from his experience, was suddenly, in the very instant of death, lit by a flame of certainty that parts of his being would be rescued from destruction. The ancient germ within him, the mighty source of life, contented with having transmitted itself in women's bodies to new and ever new manifestations, cast into his brain this faint but faithful reflection, and made him believe, as poor besotted men of flesh do believe, in the continuance of the Ego, the immortality of his individual entity which at that very moment had been extinguished.

Three forms of time moved over his fading consciousness. The calculated time of events and hours, the time in which five rifle bullets hiss through space, crash into a body as into a sack full of water, and, rending and flinging aside the contents of that sack, the living, working, breathing human sap and flesh, burrow down into the centre-point of life as a mole burrows through the earth. Next, the flashing electric time of hurrying ideas and images, of dreams that go on all night long, those dreams that endure for so brief an instant before they disappear, that they deceive the mind, and the whirling panorama takes on some semblance of reality. And last of all, time that is conditioned by the body, and is contained in the muscles and the nerves that obey the suggestions and the orders of the central soul. In that less-than-second, from the instant when those five bullets pierced the torn and stained shirt like rams' horns, so senselessly tearing that poor, quivering body, until the moment when the blood-filled veins, the hammering heart, all the intricate network of the lungs was wrecked for ever, he suffered an agony so deadly, so utterly beyond all human conception—struck, pierced, choked, and broken—that the white heat of that destruction must (one would have thought) have burned away his smile of freedom. But from the moment his body, that was himself, cracked and fell, as though from a new joint in his back, and a gush of crimson blood coloured the snow round where it lay, physical time—the time in which his body had lived and functioned—was freed from its vassalage to pain: his body could be no longer altered

by it. There lay Grischa Iljitsch Patrotkin, otherwise called Bjuscheff, in the snow, and smiled. His face and muscles had the impress of a cheerfulness that he had not known for this long while. Only his eyes shrieked under their bandage, forced horribly outwards by the suffocation of his death, as the blood welled up into his lungs from his veins and arteries, his heart, ripped from its sinews, fell into the hollow of his chest, and five small holes were torn between the ribs of his back.

And so this huddled human heap died. . . . Stones rattled down the sides of the quarry, bringing with them little clouds of powdered snow.

"All correct, I think," said Sergeant-Major Berglechner. "Civilians scream, soldiers behave properly"—and he licked his moustache as if he had drunk something. And he had in fact drunk something—his own blood—for without in the least noticing it, as he gave the order to fire, in the dreadful tension of the last second he had bitten his upper lip.

Dr. Lubbersch, whose expression of polite concern had been very little disturbed by these events—indeed, as a philosopher he felt himself superior and impervious to such everyday events—went up to what had once been Grischa, knelt for a moment by the smiling, side-flung head which, awkwardly for him, was lying on one cheek, undid the bandage, closed the eyes, and said:

"Quite dead; perfectly satisfactory. That's what we call the Hippocrates smile."

At that moment there stirred in that slowly bleeding brain what could be called life, but no one noticed it, for men die more slowly than their fellows like to think.

Laurenz Pont dismounted. The handkerchief with which those poor despairing eyes had been bound lay still knotted in the snow, yellow against the white: not a drop of the blood that was trickling slowly nearer had stained it. He felt it as a symbol of Pontius Pilate or Laurentius Pontus; that he was guiltless of the death of this innocent man.

Meanwhile, the men clicked the safety-catches on their rifles,

and showed some anxiety to get out of the cold and back to normal pursuits: they had three bottles of schnapps and a free afternoon to look forward to. The long covered object under the tarpaulin revealed itself as a coffin. But no one could be found who took any official satisfaction in putting that pierced body, while it was still soft and could be handled, into this coffin. The Corporal of Jägers pointed out that Sergeant-Major Spierauge should have detailed some men of the prison guard for this purpose. The driver of his cart stood shivering and silent by his horses.

"It isn't our job," grumbled the Jägers.

The difficulty was solved by Laurenz Pont and Dr. Lubersch, who was prepared to help Pont to carry out this melancholy but philosophic duty. As the Sergeant-Major got off his horse (at the crack of the rifles Seidlitz had merely twitched an ear, and Pont could not help patting him on the neck for it) and took off his gloves, with the actual intention of lifting the dead spy into his coffin with the help of the elegant Jewish doctor, two of the young Jägers nudged each other, took the dead man by the arms and legs and dragged him over the snow with much care so as not to stain their uniforms (his head was already dangling stiffly and horribly from the collar of his cloak), put him into the coffin and arranged his limbs in an easy attitude and folded his hands.

Suddenly the agitated jingle of a sleigh was heard and out of it jumped a flustered old gentleman with long disordered hair and a straggling beard—the Russian priest. The military police post at Bisasni village had kept him back until they could get confirmation of the fact that he was to be allowed to travel urgently: he flung himself down by the side of the coffin, in his long skirts like those of a woman, and prayed with despairing abandonment for the salvation of a soul that these heretical devils had placed in danger of eternal fire.

Pont, in the saddle once more, saw the group of men sharp and clear before him: he saw the kneeling priest place a brightly coloured holy picture framed in tin between Grischa's

folded hands, he saw Sergeant-Major Berglechner lighting a cigarette, as the men, without waiting for orders, fell in once more, and the driver waiting to take charge of the coffin and convey it to the cemetery, somewhat troubled as to who would help him get the heavy case into the sleigh after the soldiers had departed, and a deep wearisome feeling of exhaustion made him yawn. He watched the driver standing by, with drooping shoulders and drooping moustache, too tactful to disturb the foreign priest at his prayers; he arranged that the *izvostchick*, the Jewish sleigh-driver, should give the other a hand with the coffin, and turned Seidlitz towards the town. He would have preferred to ride alone: but Spierauge pulled Liese up beside him, Berglechner sprang on to his gelding, Oberarzt Dr. Lubbersch swung himself easily on to his bay, two sharp orders, rifles clattered to the slope, and the little column turned homewards swaying to the rhythm of their march.

ARMISTICE!

FROM

"THE POILUS" BY JOSEPH DELTEIL

(Translated by Jacques LeClercq)

On November 7th, 1918, at 12 o'clock, in the deepening night, an automobile rolls along the road from Chimay through La Capelle to Guise. In front of it is a stark white flag, tied to the hood. It is a towel. The headlights pierce the shadow like two scalpels. At intervals, a bugler, seated on the running-board, utters four lugubrious notes into the nothingness.

The weather is cold, useless, immortal. A thick fog crawls through the night. November weeps all her tears.

In the distance, two dogs bay the moon. The moon is silent.

The car reaches Haudroy. Here, a cry: "Who goes there?" A flash of steel, star-like. An outpost of Poilus stamp their feet in the shadows. Captain Lhuillier advances; he bars the road. The car comes to a halt. A man emerges, tall, mute; the flash of lanterns covers him with a layer of light.

General von Winterfeld.

One can feel a jumble of Boches within.

Two minutes of discussion. The general climbs into the car again. The car moves off towards La Capelle. Here and there, a rocket rises, starring the mud. In the shadow, millions of men sleep without hearts. The pulse of Time is still; the Boche clock has stopped. And ever the wail of that bugle, casting its spell over night with a percussion of dismal brasses. . . .

At La Capelle, Major de Bourbon-Basser, representing General Debeney, is waiting in the Villa Easter. The German delegation alights from the car in full force. Five men are there: General von Winterfeld, Secretary of State Erzberger,

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Count Obendorff the Ambassador, General von Gundell and Captain Vanselow of the Imperial Navy.

Next day, on November 8th, at 9 o'clock in the morning, Marshal Foch receives the delegation. The Marshal is in the drawing-room of his special train near Rethondes, in the forest of Laigle.

Then occurs that memorable dialogue, the briefest in all the world.

Marshal Foch begins reading the conditions governing the Armistice. His voice is clear and striking. A thick silence, a silence of the grave, falls upon the coach and lies there, prostrate. The Germans listen, congealed, frozen in their dead uniforms. The Marshal reads; he is without solemnity, firm downright.

Such a scene can live only by its bareness. The least emphasis impairs it; the slightest word dismembers it.

The delegation sends a courier to Spa, to General Headquarters. The Emperor and Hindenburg take cognizance of the allied clauses. But the Empire is already dead. Revolution is blazing throughout Berlin. The Emperor is struck down like a beast. Hindenburg muses.

On the 10th, the Berlin government issues a statement. At 12 o'clock, a radio informs the world: "The German government accepts all the conditions of the Armistice."

During the night between the 10th and the 11th the delegation, at Rethondes, receives the official reply. In the early hours of the morning, a final interview takes place in the famous drawing-room on the train. All is over. Secretaries draw up texts—one last ironing out of Victory. Time waits. Erzberger's head sinks between his shoulders. Foch, motionless, looks at the ceiling.

Time waits. It is endless; apparently no one cares to put an end to it. No one dares speak, move a chair, budge. A slowness of movement falls upon these men, the slowness of centuries. Now is an hour when events crush man. Outside, little

by little, a gleam is born. A vague yellowish light like a dog's paws. A dirty dawn, heavy, dismal.

At last the documents are ready. Erzberger advances. He is given a pen. For a second he looks at this pen. His hand trembles. He feels the sting of pins and needles in his fingers. He . . . But suddenly the pen falls from his hand, slashing the air, splashing ink on the carpet. Erzberger blushes, stammers an apology. Another pen is passed him. He bends over all this red tape, signs his name. The scratch of his pen explodes in the white silence, soars upward, resounds through the white dawn, reverberates among the nations.

It is 5 o'clock in the morning.

To the end of all time, I imagine men will hear the scratch of that pen.

* * * * *

The same day, at 11 o'clock sharp, the Poilu fired the last shot of the war. He was an excellent marksman. The Boche was 20 yards away. He fired. He missed.

Man had just found his heart once more.

PART IX
REVOLUTION

REVOLUTION

9

FIVE SOULS

BY W. N. EWER

First Soul

*I was a peasant of the Polish plain;
I left my plough because the message ran:
Russia, in danger, needed every man
To save her from the Teuton; and was slain.
I gave my life for freedom—This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.*

Second Soul

*I was a Tyrolese, a mountaineer;
I gladly left my mountain home to fight
Against the brutal, treacherous Muscovite;
And died in Poland on a Cossack spear.
I gave my life for freedom—This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.*

Third Soul

*I worked at Lyons at my weaver's loom,
When suddenly the Prussian despot hurled
His felon blow at France and at the world;
Then went I forth to Belgium and my doom.
I gave my life for freedom—This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.*

Fourth Soul

*I owned a vineyard by the wooded Main,
Until the Fatherland, begirt by foes
Lusting her downfall, called me, and I rose
Swift to the call, and died in fair Lorraine.
I gave my life for freedom—This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.*

Fifth Soul

*I worked in a great shipyard by the Clyde.
There came a sudden word of wars declared,
Of Belgium, peaceful, helpless, unprepared,
Asking our aid: I joined the ranks, and died.
I gave my life for freedom—This I know:
For those who bade me fight had told me so.*

*From The New York Tribune
Monday, November 11, 1918*

GERMANY HAS SURRENDERED; WORLD WAR ENDED AT 6 A. M.

ARMISTICE WAS SIGNED BY HUN ENVOYS AT MIDNIGHT

*OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT FROM WASHINGTON DECLARES
END OF GREAT STRUGGLE—HOSTILITIES CEASE ON WEST
FRONT AS GERMANS YIELD TO ALLIED TERMS*

*GERMANS MUST WITHDRAW SOLDIERS IMMEDIATELY FROM
ALSACE-LORRAINE—OCCUPIED TERRITORY IN FRANCE AND
BELGIUM MUST BE EVACUATED AND ENEMY'S ARMY DEMOBI-
LIZED—ALLIES TO GET PART OF HIGH SEAS FLEET AND
U-BOATS*

Washington, Nov. 11.—The armistice has been signed. The State Department announced the signing at 2:45 o'clock this morning.

The world war will end this morning at 6 o'clock, Washington time, 11 o'clock Paris time. The armistice was signed by the German representatives at midnight. This announcement was made by the State Department at 2:50 o'clock this morning.

The announcement was made verbally by an official of the State Department in this form:

"The armistice has been signed. It was signed at 5 o'clock A.M., Paris time, and hostilities will cease at 11 o'clock this morning, Paris time.

The terms of the armistice, it was announced, will not be made until later. Military men here, however, regard it as certain that they include:

Immediate retirement by the German military forces from France, Belgium, and Alsace-Lorraine.

Disarming and demobilization of the German armies.

THE LOOK OF BERLIN

FROM

"RETROSPECT" BY FRED J. RINGEL

(*Translated by Elsa Talmey*)

On the ninth of November the Revolution broke out in Berlin.

It was the uprising of a desperate people after a lost war. It began up north at the coast. The fleet seethed for days—till the storm broke forth, and, like an avalanche, swept down upon the entire country.

It began when in desperation before impending defeat, the command to put to sea was given—to put to sea for the last battle, a battle in which surrender was inevitable, and which must have impressed each clear-sighted person as sheer madness. The command was issued by the admiralty. By the admiralty that, regardless of the sacrifice, would rather see the fleet sunk without trace than surrendered to the British.

"We'd sooner fire our last two-hundred shots and go down with flying colors . . ." said the commander of the S.M.S. THURINGEN. The sailors answered: let him do it himself! . . . Insubordination. Mutiny. Two cannon-boats were brought up—the muzzles of the gun-barrels were leveled at their own comrades.

On the 28th of October the stokers three times prevented the battle fleet from setting sail. They set up the fire-extinguishers, and the fires went out in all the boilers. Each command of "Put to sea" brought the same response . . .

Here was open mutiny.

Then at the bay of Kiel those breathtaking elemental forces broke lose, which spread speedily and gripped the empire, breaking angrily through all its dikes and dams, no matter how

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strong, inundating all North and South Germany, and by the end of the week, rocking Berlin's masses of stone to their foundations.

That was on the ninth of November, 1918.

General strike. Extras. Abdication of the Kaiser. Workers march out of the factories. Soldiers and sailors with red arm-bands form processions. Barracks are stormed one after another, soldiers disarmed, documents thrown out on the streets. Officers tear epaulets from their shoulders, rip cockades off their caps, toss them into the air:

"HOCH DIE WELTREVOLUTION!" ——

It comes to shooting at many street-corners. In no time the streets are deserted; behind barred gates cower indifferent passers-by; latest information passes from mouth to mouth and is eagerly absorbed. In the Chausseestrasse the "Mairkäufer" have entrenched themselves; struggles for the possession of the barracks rage fiercely.

In the afternoon, the red flag is hoisted over the Reichstag: Scheidemann announces the victory of the Republic. Workers' and soldiers' councils take over police control. Streets are closed, autos whizzing by are halted and searched for weapons. The deserted canyons of the streets resound with sporadic shots from the roofs.

Toward evening, endless masses have gathered in the Lustgarten. Suddenly the red flag rises over the imperial palace.

Thundering cheers break out:

"Nieder mit dem Krieg! ——"

"NIEDER!—NIEDER!—NIEDER! . . ."

"Die Revolution, sie lebe hoch! ——"

"HOCH!—HOCH!—HOCH! . . ."

From the balcony of the palace, Liebknecht speaks to the masses. Below, on the top of an auto, stands the hoary Lebedour.

There is devout silence while Liebknecht speaks. Then the bronze bells of the dome begin to peal. Slowly and long and

steadily. Breathless silence. A solemn moment, never to be forgotten. Liebknecht stands, gazes at the dome. With an expressive gesture towards the gloomy, clouded sky he speaks . . .

"Now they are ringing in the birth of the revolution, comrades, A new era is dawning for humanity . . ."

Close behind him, burning with enthusiasm, stands Joel.

Then, with the release of all fetters, days of disorder, tumult, and insurrection follow. Red sailors overrun Berlin; on trucks they clash and rattle through the streets. In their eyes flashes the recklessness of their uprooted existence. Death-challenging hands grasp leather rifle-slings. Ready for battle and murder they stand guard for the young Republic. Amidst them, in a long soldier's cloak, stands Joel. He sleeps with them in unguarded armories, sleeps with his pals, comrades, suffers hunger, gorges, lives from hand to mouth, and works ceaselessly for the revolution.

His life-lie had begun long ago. He was, of course, far beyond his years in experience and suffering. This was evident even in his outward appearance; one did not believe his age. Besides, it was to his disadvantage to have his correct age revealed; they treated him as a child, as if he were under-aged, and not as the full-grown man he was in experience and capabilities. By advancing his age a few years, however, he achieves equality. He is a member of the youth section of the Spartacus League, wears a red band on his arm, carries a revolver in his pocket, and keeps in close touch with the council of workers and soldiers. . . .

He does not know what makes him so restless, so discontent and headstrong, and cannot even feel clearly enough the conflict in his present mode of living, which is in such strong contrast to his former life. The loss of the comrades whom he no longer sees, the shattering of his ideals: the Volksheim lives, his friends fight for principles, revolution pulsates in the streets . . . And he?—He stands at the window, at the window of the palatial hotel and gazes down at the street, so

far, far away. Workers are marching along, soldiers of the revolution, they fight for social brotherhood ——

And after three weeks he is out again, out on the streets. Free! And he is so enraptured over his recovered freedom that he does not even notice how close he is to the same gray, gruesome nothingness. Again he runs around for work, again he lives on casual help from his comrades—but he is working for the revolution, for the great coming world revolution!

“A new era for humanity is dawning . . .”

The new era had not yet dawned. The revolution had not been brought to an end. The more red posters on monuments, museums, and palaces proclaimed: “Property of the People,” the more blantly manifestos cried: “Socialization progresses,” the further removed were the masses from the realization of these promises. Words, words . . . Substitutes for deeds.

In the meanwhile the counter-revolution mobilized. The dispossessed nobility, the high officials, the imperial officers, all stirred up and goaded the returning war troops against the bolshevist plague that threatened the Vaterland. The split in the Socialist Party had prepared fertile soil for this. Socialist against socialist—with the watchword: *Against Spartacus and Bolshevism*. The socialist government itself organized the “White Guards” and equipped them with cannons, machine-guns, and liquid fire.

“Blutige Weihnachten” they dubbed the holidays of 1918.

Nevertheless in January, 1919, Spartacus revolted. The Spartacus League, under the leadership of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, rebelled against the betrayal of the revolution! But the counter force was powerful enough to line up cannon and machine-gun battalions, so that the city droned for days, the echoing houses shaken to the very ground by the bombardments. Overnight Berlin was transformed into a battlefield. Desperately, the civil war raged for the final victory. For days the battle centered around the Police Head-

quarters; relentlessly the newspaper district was bombarded and besieged. Streets strewn with corpses, collapsing houses, fleeing masses, isolated shots from roofs of dwellings, reverberating thunder from the cannon of the government troops.

Through the tenement-walled canyons of the streets echoed the cry: "CLEAR THE STREETS! AWAY FROM THE WINDOWS!"

Then the clattering of machine guns,—bombs whizzed by, tore up houses, streets covered with corpses, government forces marched on, fire-throwers spat their singeing avalanches of flame on the asphalt. Barricades in the streets. Civil War. Waving white kerchiefs, the residents fled from house to house. Workers were still posted here and there on the roofs, the barrels of their guns aimed bitterly at stray victims. The Red Cross gave first aid to the severely wounded. The upheaval of the revolution exacted monstrous sacrifices of promising human lives.

On the 17th of January, 1919, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg were treacherously assassinated by the government troops.

The revolt of the masses, the will of the people for social brotherhood, was compressed into a national constitution.

Whereupon peace and order, and the old system returned in a new form.

THE COLLAPSE OF AUSTRIA

FROM

"LET THE DAY PERISH" BY SAUL K. PADOVER

The Habsburg Empire goes crashing into the junk-heap of history.

The Polish eagle with the cruel claws supplants the double-headed Austrian bird of prey.

The Poles go wild. They reel on the streets drunk with whisky and "victory." The petty bourgeoisie of the towns, so meek and genteel during the Austrian regime, become insolent beyond endurance. Every Jew on the street is an enemy and a pariah dog. The patriots smash Jewish windows, rob, steal, beat old Jewish men and offend Jewish women. They walk the streets at night, rioting and hilariously singing about the redoubtable national victory on the battlefields. "At last we have conquered!"

In the provinces there is confusion and chaos. The returned soldiers turn into predatory bands and make the land unsafe for the defenseless population. Every man's hand is raised against his neighbor, and all combine forces against the Jew.

Forgetting their own history, the Poles turn like a pack of maddened tigers on the defenseless Jews. A flood of poison in the form of newspaper propaganda, pamphlets, speeches and sermons is let loose. Its tenor is, the dirty Jew must be exterminated. Never since the middle ages have the Jews faced such a protracted fire of hatred and fury. Jew, Jew, Jew—everywhere Jew! The air stinks with hate. All sections of the Polish population are united in one common all-absorbing aim: the extermination of the Jews. Government is forgotten, law and order is neglected, reconstruction is ignored,

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the typhus and cholera epidemic is allowed to go unchecked; only one ambition devours the Pole—the Jew must be exterminated!

The Jews in the villages are the first victims. They are utterly isolated, and so easy targets for Christian love. Many are killed; many escape with nothing but shirts on their backs into the towns hoping to find safety in huddled numbers.

The grandfather flees in the dead of night. His ancestors have lived on the same land, in and about the same village, for many centuries. But he is driven from his home like a mad dog. For three days and three nights he and his wife stay indoors, with barricaded doors and windows. The peasants besiege the house day after day, throwing stones and bricks, hammering, pounding, jeering. They trample the garden, break the fences, steal the fowl. A brick breaks through a thin board and strikes the grandfather on the head. Bleeding heavily, he faints. And outside, the patriots pound and jeer, pound and jeer, threatening and trampling, breaking and crashing. They tear down the well, throw filthy things into the pure water, fill it with bricks and mud and excrement . . .

Late in the night, when all is quiet, the old couple slips out of their home. When the peasants find the house is empty, they pounce upon the ancient structure and tear it to pieces. They use the logs for kindling wood.

* * * * *

Simultaneously with the coming of "peace" a typhus and cholera epidemic hits Central Europe. In the confusion that reigns friends and relatives lose track of each other. Word comes that Lieutenant Siegel, a former member of the Austrian Town Commander's staff and a friend of the family, lies ill with the cholera, untended, forgotten and dying in the miserable barracks. Siegel is a friend . . . a Jew . . . true, stricken with an infectious disease, but among Jews the sense of kinship is stronger than self-interest or fear. A wagon is hired and the dying lieutenant is brought to the house.

Next day two Polish legionaries, fully armed, enter and begin searching the house. There is Siegel unconscious with burning fever. On a chair nearby lie his earthly possessions, a sword, a pistol, a field-bottle, two pair of underwear. . . . On his coat are pinned three medals for bravery gained in the Carpathian campaign, one of which is the Grosse Silberne Medaille, a prominent Austrian decoration. The legionary who wears sergeant's stripes tears the blanket off the sick man's bed, spreads it on the floor, and drops the lieutenant's belongings into it. Then he strips the coat of its medals and insignia. Siegel opens his eyes, takes in the scene, and his pale lips twist into a contemptuous smile. He tries to raise a feeble arm, tries to say something, but succeeds only in uttering a hoarse little whisper.

Reb Solomon, the white-haired patriarch whose house it is, goes up to the sergeant and says bitterly, "The rules of war, sir, I believe, require that even an enemy should be treated with humanity when he is ill. Lieutenant Siegel is an Austrian officer; he is not your enemy, he is ill and dying. You could have waited at least till he is dead before robbing him of his personal goods."

The Pole turns fiercely on the old man. "Shut your stinking mouth, you pig of a Jew! We are masters now!"

"So I see," retorts the aged Jew his eyes flashing. The soldier gives him a resounding blow in the mouth.

The women cry out in horror, and the sergeant bellows, "Stop yelling, you daughters of bitches!" Then he looks around the room and his eyes fall on the sixteen-year old Albert. "Hey filthy Jew-dog, carry this bundle for me!" It is an unfortunate choice, for Albert is wild-tempered and fearless. He flings himself at the soldier with a bellow of rage. "Carry a bundle for you, for you! A vile, manure-stinking, lice-bitten, groveling skunk! You, a cowardly Pollack who strikes feeble old men! You, an insect three inches removed from a monkey! You, a loathsome son of ——! I'll see you rotting on a manure-heap first. . . !"

The legionary, livid in face, snatches out a pistol and with shaking arm points it to Albert's forehead. "I give you three minutes to decide."

A dozen hands hold the maddened boy. His mother is imploring him, crying and moaning, not to be obstinate. Every one pleads with him; but he only looks wildly about him, whipping the Pole with a tongue that knows no restraint, begging Paul to bring him a hammer, an axe, a knife, anything . . .

Fearful two minutes pass and the legionary's arm with the revolver is still extended a few inches from Albert's forehead. Paul is trembling in every limb. "Now," snaps the soldier. Paul gives a blind hoarse cry, "Hold, I'll take it."

In silence the boy follows the two soldiers. When they get near the barracks which are in back of the town, the sergeant turns around, "Drop the bundle!". "And now run, bloody dog-brother!"

Paul drops the bundle, but his blood, more sluggish than that of his brother, is beginning to boil. He looks at the soldier with eyes that are hot with hatred, puts his hands in his pockets and begins to stroll leisurely away.

"Run, dog-brother, or I shoot!"

The boy's heart begins to pump madly with fear. To be shot in the back! . . . But still he walks slowly.

A bullet hisses over his head, another buzzes close to his ear hitting the core of a tree in front. In one mad leap Paul is behind the tree. He runs from tree to tree, fleet of foot and terrified like a haunted hare. The bullets hiss through the branches. . . .

He returns home panting, with bloodless face and terror-stricken eyes. Albert yells at him savagely, "You cowardly little sneak! It's craven pups like you that make the Pollacks trample on us! If we Jews would learn to stab and kill and torture like they do, the — Pollacks would grovel at our feet —!"

The epidemic which levels the population with majestic im-

partiality restrains the Poles, for the time being, from carrying out their extermination program. They can wait for the cholera to spend itself, for isn't the epidemic, which affects mainly the towns, where the Jews mainly congregate, their ally? But not quite. The cholera is comparatively mild.

One market-day Albert loses his temper and upsets the town. He asks a peasant woman the price of berries, and she seeing his dark curly hair and flashing proud eyes, sneers, "I do not trade with filthy Jews." Whereupon, without much ado, he picks up the largest basket of ripe strawberries and hurls it in her face. She begins to scream and shout for help: The Jews are killing her! Excited peasants, armed with pitchforks and spades, come running in all directions, yelling, threatening, smashing . . . Albert kicks over the woman's baskets, tramples on the berries, hits her a blow in the nose that knocks her bleeding to the ground, ducks under the wagon and disappears . . . The Jews scurry for shelter . . .

The townspeople complain and protest bitterly. That boy is as wild as a leopard; he will be their undoing yet! Albert listens with a face that expresses sullen contempt.

"Mother," he says as she stands over him angry and helpless, "I can't live here. I swear to God I'll kill some of these Pollacks one fine day and beat it. I'm nearing military age, and I'd see them dead first before I'd serve in their army. Let me go away, mother. I want to go to Germany and from there to father. I'd go now, but something's wrong with me; my head aches and I feel hot and cold all over."

It is the typhus.

The same evening Paul begins to feel hot and cold and his teeth chatter. He is laid in bed opposite his brother; the doctor quarantines their room. Their mother can not tend them; she has to take care of a sister of hers who with six small children lies ill. For three weeks she never leaves her sister's house; for three weeks she does not see her sick children who are casually attended by an old woman. When the mother is allowed to come and see her emaciated boys she breaks down

and cries softly. She looks greyer than ever and there is a world of infinite suffering in her eyes.

As soon as Albert recovers strength he begins to plead with his mother to let him go. The two boys are all she has in the world . . . but she must not detain him . . .

"Very well," she says, trying hard to control her voice, "will five hundred marks be sufficient?"

"Oh, two hundred will do!"

"No, take five hundred. You won't need any money once you are in Germany, but you may need a lot on the road. As soon as you arrive, write to father to send you his citizenship papers. . . . And—and promise me one thing, say on your word of honor you'll write me every week ——"

"Oh," he mutters gruffly, his stoicism struggling with his emotions, "I promise . . . 'pon my word of honor . . ."

Two, three, four, five days and night—sleepless and harrowing nights—pass before a hurriedly scribbled postcard comes from Czecho-Slovakia. A week later he writes from Germany. He is with uncle Rudolph and is exultant. He does not write his mother of his experiences on the road, of his being shot at by the frontier guards while climbing the Carpathians, of his being interned in a lice- and disease-infested camp in Hungary, of his reckless escape . . . of his arrival in Germany swollen, frost-bitten, tattered and ill. . . .

The pogroms begin on a stupendous scale. Each town is islanded in the midst of a raging stream of mob passions. The Jews can not travel on the trains where they are kicked, beaten, wounded, killed, robbed of their possessions, their beards ripped out, frequently hurled out bodily.

There is not a hole for the Jews to escape into. The ground is burning under their feet. They cast their eyes in all directions, imploring the civilized world to save them, imploring, imploring, hiding, only infrequently fighting back . . . but always imploring . . .

The great Polish nation with its nineteen million people, its peasants and workers, merchants and artists, intellectuals and

professionals, soldiers and priests, all join in the Jew-hunt, all want to have a hand in the annihilation of the cursed Christ-killers. If there is a Polish voice that protests it is not heard in the land.

Humiliations and outrages against the Jews pile up thick and fast. What is most terrorizing is the news of slaughter elsewhere in the republic that spreads like a prairie fire. The gleeful tidings of butchery are skillfully disseminated among the Polish masses to serve as an incentive and pattern. The Jew-thirsty masses are converging closer and closer, the noose is tightening . . . Yesterday the frightful massacre in the Jewish quarter in Lemberg; today the carnage in Stanislawow, Minsk, Kolbuszowa, Vilna . . . Streams of Jewish blood are deluging Poland, moving swifter and swifter, coming . . . coming . . . coming! . . .

A group of Jewish young men, released from the army after the collapse of Austria, organize a Self-Defense Unit and parade the streets day and night with fixed bayonets. The police grumble and threaten; the Defense group, so the Polish guardians of law and order maintain, is illegal, has no right to carry arms. The young Jews retort that they had four years of constant warfare in which they learned to kill and gut bellies as well as their Christian neighbors and that they are prepared to protect their families and property with their lives.

The long-threatened pogrom takes place today. At sunrise peasants armed with pitchforks, bayonets, spades and axes, but with few firearms, and peasant women pulling light carts in which to store pillaged goods, stream into town in an endless procession. They are quiet, ominous and stealthy, acting on a preconceived plan. The Jews seek shelter, hiding their possessions in cellars and holes, barricading doors and windows. A stormy silence is in the air. The signal is given; the mob, like a burst sack, pounces upon the houses . . . With shouts that rend the air and strike terror in the hearts of the concealed Jews, the mob surges and smashes and robs house after house . . . surges ever nearer and nearer . . . And then, from a

narrow street, two, four, six, ten, twenty soldiers, wearing the Austrian uniform, carrying guns with fixed bayonets, trot into the square. It is the Jewish militia.

They grip their guns nervously, point them above the heads of the seething peasants and fire. Volley after volley they fire in quick truculent succession. The mob grows panicky, drops the loot and flees in confusion. The militia trots after the fleeing peasants in admirable soldierly order, loads and fires, loads and fires. There is no resistance . . .

* * * * *

The county boasts of a priest who is a member of the Sejm. He is an ingratiating eloquent orator and is much beloved of the peasants. His bitter rival is another member of the Sejm, also a peasant, whom destiny, inscrutable in its workings, has marked out to be premier of Poland . . . On Tuesday the former priest and the future premier come to town to fight it out on the platform in the market place. Peasants throng to town in huge numbers and a pogrom is imminent.

The Jews go into hiding, but there is no pogrom. Okin, the eloquent ex-priest, has said, "Today, brother peasants, all must be quiet, for it is a day of love and peace. Restrain your noble impatience: the Jews will not escape you ——"

Paul pulls his cap over his eyes to hide his Jewishness and slips out of the house. Okin, unctuous and round-bellied, with laughing eyes and large mouth, stands on a table, rather tipsy, and abuses his lean opponent, who is even deeper in his cups, in the language of the fish-market. He works himself up to a pitch of tearful wrath and the spectators applaud gleefully. He talks very powerfully and uses God and the whole heavenly hierarchy for his thunderbolt. Then his opponent, who is lean, lanky and choleric, is lifted on the table and begins lashing the "reverend father" with whips of scorpions and thongs of steel. The crowd is hilarious. Suddenly, apropos of nothing in particular, the peasant deputy spreads his long lean arms in a gesture of heroic surrender and in a bibulous voice exclaims,

"Let us make peace, brother! Embrace me, brother!" The ex-priest has tears in his eyes. In an unctuous voice that vibrates with grape-fermented emotion he cries, "Peace, brother! The Lord hath commanded that we love one another! He died on the cross that we love one another! Kiss me, brother!" And while the peasants gape, the two statesmen embrace and hug each other in brotherly love, as the Lord, who died on the cross, hath commanded.

After two more attempted and narrowly prevented pogroms, the Jewish militia is forcibly disbanded and its arms and ammunition requisitioned by the government. The Jews are now thoroughly at the mercy of the Poles and prepare against the impending massacre. Those who possess jewels and silver bury them in their gardens. More ponderous goods, such as clothing, linen, feather-beds, are transported to stone cellars and there walled up. Legal tender and banknotes are either sewed in the lining of children's coats or stowed away in metal pots or boxes and concealed in fantastic places such as woodpiles, roof beams, rubbish heaps. . . .

The town becomes a Mecca for peasants from far and near. Fortunately greed gets the better of their ferocity. Except for clubs and such things they come without firearms. Nor are arms necessary, for do they not well know that with the militia disbanded they would find no resistance?

The first objectives are the saloons. Rolling out casks of wine and barrels of beer into the market place, they drink and drink and make merry. When they have drunk enough to satisfy all human needs, they grow warm-hearted and their generosity embraces all nature. Pouring wine and beer into pails, the lusty merrymakers made their horses drink. . . . Man and beast have a good time.

The stores and shops facing the square are broken into and the goods devoured by hungry hands. Once a store is emptied the peasants smash every breakable object, break the shelves and windows and tear the doors off the hinges. The latter is a symbol of emancipation.

Paul's relatives gather in the stone house of a friend. The building faces the square and is stoutly shuttered and barricaded. About thirty persons crouch in one large room; those more hardy watch the looting through slits in the shutters. The women are cowering in corners and on the floor; they moan and look fearfully haunted. The men are pale as sheets. From the market place intoxicating and victorious bawls rise to the gloomy room like subtle emanations from a deadly swamp. . . .

There is something haunting in the articulate passions of a victorious mob. Each yell sounds like a death knell to those exposed to its mercy. The voices dissociate from the bodies, fly on swift wings and find their object with impersonal and deadly effect. The memory of it grinds itself into the brain and accompanies one to the grave. The heart bleeds and palpitates; one feels sharp hammer blows on the head; pincers tugging at the heart; one hears one's blood dripping, dripping, and each drop weighs like a ton. And time crawls and crawls, silently, agonizingly, almost mockingly.

Paul is at the window, his eye glued to a chink in the shutter. He hasn't eaten anything but a piece of unbuttered stale bread and that he did not digest. It lies like a hard clump in his bowels and what with the terror, and excitement, his intestines knot up and cause him stabbing pain. He rolls up and gasps for breath moaning like a wounded animal. The ache comes in periodic waves, and every time it goes he raises himself to the window. . . .

A terrified young Jew with a red beard is running for his life with a pack of peasants at his heels. He is headed off, a club is raised and with one swift powerful swing descends on the Jew's head. A crash, a screaming rattle from the mortally wounded man's throat dying short in its career, and the Jew crumples in a bloody heap. The terror in those eyes! . . . Paul's knees sink and he falls back from the shutter as if his brain had been clubbed out. . . .

The sun sets and still the looting and shouting goes on. The

peasants light torches, run to and fro like frantic shadows, bellowing and singing hoarsely. Of a sudden a voice roars, "Let's burn the town!" A thousand voices take up the cry and send it floating across the dark, penetrating a thousand dim minds, providing a thousand aimless wills with a purpose.

Merciful God! Fire! There is no escape from fire! "Burn the town——!" . . . Paul forgets his colic, his terror, the crumpled, mangled Jew under the window. . . . Hot violent blood dashes against his temples, rings in his ears, blinds him. He is convulsed by a mad passion for murder. He trembles audibly and his mother puts a spasmodic arm around him, her chest heaving. "Mother," he gasps, his blue lips tight and his small fists clenched so that the veins swell, "I wish I had a machine gun! I'd climb on the roof! I'd mow them down! I'd reduce them to bloody pulp! Bloody pulp! Bloody pulp! Bloody pulp! . . ."

And outside like a Bacchanalian song the words "Burn the town" pass from drunken mouth to drunken mouth. Except for the flickering torches it is pitch dark.

In another part of town, in a house protected by the mark of a cross on its door, sit the postmaster, the priest and the police inspector. "Burn the town" is ringing in their ears; they are pale. This is a hitch in the program: burning was not on their list. The town, to be sure, is largely Jewish, but fire has no perceptible patriotic prejudices. There is the postoffice building to be considered, and the nice tall Catholic church, and the monastery, and the school, and the courthouse. . . . Frantically the postmaster begins wiring neighboring garrisons for help. At last one garrison responds. About ten o'clock, not a second too early, a special train arrives. The locomotive siren keeps on emitting shrill sounds for about fifteen minutes. It is to warn the peasants to make off with their loot. The soldiers do not enter the town but fire several shots in the air from the station. Again as a warning. The peasants see the point. They load their wagons, fill their bags and carts and go home.

In the morning the town is desolate. The streets are strewn thick with damaged and trampled wares and furniture. Feathers from ripped feather-beds and pillows decorate every wall, every roof, every alley and street. Mournfully, brokenheartedly Jewish men and women and children stalk through the waste, many anxiously searching in the debris for lost property, others conversing tragically in bent-backed circles. . . .

REVOLT IN THE ARMY

FROM

"FROM DOUBLE EAGLE TO RED FLAG" BY P. N. KRASSNOFF

The Emperor generally took his walk at eleven o'clock. At that hour they were to enter the park. The weather was uncertain. Heavy clouds swept across the blue sky and a strong wind blew from the sea. The car worked well and steadily. The small red flag which waved over it showed that all who occupied it had acknowledged the revolution. So many cars drove about the town in those days, with young ensigns and soldiers, that Nika did not arouse anybody's suspicion. He was taken for some delegate or member of the Sovdep. Russia's future belonged to the Ensigns, the day was theirs and it was they and not the Generals who disposed of the motor-cars. The car's presence did not astonish anyone even when it drove into the park and took the direction of the Alexander Palace. Nika, endeavouring to master his agitation and not to rise in his impatience in his seat, was all attention. The road bordered by willow trees widened, and first an iron grate was seen, then appeared the sentries with rifles and at last the gate-way was before them. It stood wide open. The car put on speed and seemed to fly.

The Grand Duchess and the Tsarevitch were sitting on the lawn before the palace. The Princesses were in simple blouses and wore small hats. The Tsarevitch was in a military shirt with soldier's shoulder-straps, and the St. George's medal was pinned on his breast. He wore a military cap and top-boots. They had just been working in their vegetable-garden. A soldier in an apron with a spade in his hands stood behind them, he was one of the palace servants. The Emperor sat on a

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bench near by and the Grand Duchess Olga Nicholaievna was reading to him. They were quite by themselves; Gaiduk could not be seen. The car dashed up. The brakes grated and the suddenness of the halt nearly tossed Nika out of his seat. The Emperor rose and the Tsarevitch followed him. The Emperor was very pale; he had grown thin and his beard was turning grey. He looked questioningly at Nika.

"Your Majesty, get in quickly with the Tsarevitch. We have come to save you," Nika said.

The Emperor shook his head. Nika made the sign of the cross.

"We are Russian people, Your Majesty, and we suffer deeply from your imprisonment; we have come to save you and the Tsarevitch. Please get in, Your Majesty."

The Tsarevitch was looking at Nika with curiosity. The Emperor did not speak.

"You don't trust us, Your Majesty?" Nika said breathlessly. "I swear that we are not liars. We belong to the old nobility, we are your faithful subjects."

"I believe you," the Emperor answered distinctly, his face twitching nervously. "But I will fulfil my duty to the end. Let God's will and my people's be done. The Russian people won't harm me, as I never wished them any harm."

The soldiers and Gaiduk were running from the palace.

"Take hold of them by force," Pavlik screamed. The Tsarevitch began to cry and pressed against the Emperor. Nika was seized by a sudden weakness and indecision; he dared not touch the Emperor. An expression of infinite sadness was in the Tsar's beautiful eyes.

"You won't employ force, it will only make matters worse," the Emperor said gently and turned towards the guard as if seeking their protection.

"All is lost," Pavlik said.

"Get in," Petroff said, "we will escape." Pavlik dragged Nika into the car and immediately it left forward. Shots were heard behind them.

"They are shooting at us," Petroff murmured. "Thy will be done."

The car swung round the lawn; Gaiduk ran across it, shouting something to the sentry at the gate, but it was too late, the car was already dashing along the road.

For a long time no one spoke. Nika could not grasp what had taken place. Pavlik was sitting near him. The wind was blowing in their ears. The road looked white and even. Everything seemed to be flying towards them—the hay-carts, the barking dogs, the villages with the grey cottages, the small gardens, the inns, surrounded by innumerable peasant-carts; their own horn sounded continually, the children along the road-side screamed at them, the springs of their car tossed them up high when they passed over bridges, under which dark streams were flowing, and before them stretched the road, as straight as an arrow, bordered narrowly on both sides by dark firs and pines.

Petroff slackened down and turned round. The road stretched for many versts behind them and nothing was to be seen on it.

"Well," Petroff said, "we have failed. You must hide now. The soldiers will certainly betray you. We will go to my mother and see what can be done."

"And you, Petroff?"

"I will manage all right, no one knows me. Perhaps the car has been recognized. I'll be back tonight; I will store the car and go and lie down. All will be well with me. But the soldiers know you."

The car turned in the darkness and crossing a ditch entered the forest and stopped.

"You, Pavel Nicholaievitch, keep watch for a moment while I lead Nicholai Nicholaievitch to our house."

Nika followed Petroff for over an hour along a narrow forest-path. The prickly firs scratched their faces and the damp soil creaked under their feet. At last a forest-glade, a lake and six cottages facing it appeared before them. The

moon on its decline rose above the water and was reflected mysteriously in its dark surface. The dogs barked hoarsely, but no light was to be seen. The cottage-windows were all dark.

Petroff knocked for a long time at a cottage-door. At last they heard steps and an old voice asked, what was wanted.

"It is I, mother," Petroff said. "I have brought you lodgers."

The door was opened; a stout, old woman stood in the doorway, lit up by a small, smoking lamp; she was wrapping a grey woolen shawl round her shoulders. She looked at Nika with kind eyes and murmured: "Come in, and be welcome. God bless you. Are you hiding from the soldiers?"

Nika entered the dark room which smelt of fowl.

* * * * *

On the 30th of July intense agitation reigned in the palace from early morning. The Emperor had been informed of the Temporary Government's decision to send him and his family to Tobolsk for his personal security. His safety had been guaranteed him and he had been promised that all measures would be taken for his and his family's comfort. The majority of the Emperor's suite and servants had voluntarily decided to follow him.

At ten minutes past six in the morning on the 1st of August the train, carrying the Emperor and his family into banishment, slowly left the station. The soldiers of the 2nd and 4th regiments formed its escort.

In the middle of August the Morochnensky Infantry regiment, which was stationed 20 versts from the positions, received the order to go into the trenches to relieve the Pavlinovsky regiment. The order was signed by the Corps Commander, the General who had replaced Sablin.

A meeting was organized to discuss this order. The government, which was not recognized by the Provisional Government, but which was represented everywhere by the Soviet of the Soldiers' and Workmen's deputies and with which all the innumerable committees of the front, the Army, the Divisions,

the Corps, the Regiments and the Companies created by Kerensky and Goutshkoff, were in continual contact,—that government had decreed that not every order of the chiefs must be blindly obeyed.

The orders were divided into military orders, which the revolutionary discipline required everyone to carry out implicitly, and non-military orders, which, before being complied with, it was not only permitted but even advised to examine, so as to make sure they did not tend to shatter the achievements of the revolution, that they were not meant to bring back the former régime.

The meeting took place the evening preceding the attack, in a small town, half Polish and half Jewish, in the square in front of a Catholic church and of a ruined house of a Polish landowner. A grey crowd of soldiers, numbering fifteen hundred men, crushed together on the square in front of the platform which had been erected at the demand of the local revolutionary leaders in the "happy" days of the March revolution. Leaning on each other's shoulders, eating and spitting sun-flower seeds, shouting to each other and continually interrupting the orators, the men listened to the officers or the soldiers who in turn sought to persuade them of the necessity of obeying the order.

The meeting was long and noisy. At last a soldier climbed clumsily on the platform. He smiled broadly and uncovering his head shouted:

"My best greetings to you, comrades, and to all our honest people. Yes. But we must go into the front lines out of fellow feeling. They are worn out and we are rested. It is only just and we will go! Not because we are ordered to do so, but out of justice and brotherhood. Let them rest, we will show what stuff we, the Morochnensky soldiers, are made of. We were always good comrades, we won't fail now!"

He tossed his cap into the air and left the platform. He was loudly cheered and the exclamation of: "That's right, well said!" followed him.

The crowd began to disperse. It was about supper time.

"What is your opinion, Kazimir Kazimirovitch," Kozloff asked Wertzinsky, "will they go or not?"

"All depends on the weather," Wertzinsky answered. "They may go if the weather is fine."

Kozloff looked ten years older after these four last months. His arrest by his own soldiers, the Army's ruin, had affected him deeply.

The morning when they were to take the field was foggy and grey. A drizzling rain was falling; nevertheless the regiment, talking and screaming, left the village noisily. There was a river, ten versts from the night's lodging and half way from the lines; Cossack sentries guarded the bridges that were thrown over it. The regiment was to halt there.

The men were drawing near in a grey, noisy crowd. They advanced slowly and gloomily, no songs were heard. They did not like singing the old songs, they were ashamed of them and they knew too few new ones.

"Halt!" sounded the command, when the leading company had reached the river. "Halt, halt!" was repeated in all the sixteen companies and, without waiting for the permission to do so, the men sat down wherever they fancied and lit their cigarettes.

Scarcely were they seated, when a sailor appeared in their midst; his cap was pushed to the back of his head, his shirt left his neck and chest bare. He had come from the neighbouring railway-station. He was young, impudent looking and alert. He talked to one group of soldiers, then to another, and a third; suddenly single soldiers began to leave the regiment and ran towards the bridge. Once there, they took off their cartridge-pouches, pulled the cartridges out and flung them into the water. Separate shots sounded: the soldiers were firing into the air. This continued for several minutes, then the entire regiment was seized by madness: incessant, disorderly firing sounded all over the stately oak-forest which sloped towards the river.

The men dragged out the cartridge-boxes, snatched the machine-gun belts and threw them into the water. Screams of: "Down with the war!" were heard from all sides amid the shooting. To the right several hundred voices were singing the melody of the Marseillaise roughly and coarsely. New voices joined them continually. The firing had spread all over the regiment. The shots, repeated by the echo in the forest, seemed louder. First one and then a second machine-gun started shooting in the forest, and the fierce, wild Marseillaise was carried along the river, at times louder, then fainter, exciting and carrying the men away. Only a few knew the words, and the song sung without them was but a savage and fierce howl.

"Down with the war. Down with the officers! Arrest them."

When the first shots had been fired Kozloff mounted and rode towards the soldiers.

"You have gone mad," he shouted. "Who are you? Germans? Germans? Joined up with them? Stop shooting! Officers, to your posts!"

Pale faces were all around. The men didn't understand what had taken place. Their eyes were terrible. Soldiers, not belonging to the regiment, were running from the village carrying red flags.

"Grab the Commander!" someone shouted, and Jelieskin, his orderly, caught hold of the bridle of Kozloff's horse. The crowd surrounded him. He was about to draw his revolver, but his intention was guessed. One of the soldiers caught hold of the holster, clung to it and tore it off together with the weapon. The shooting and singing had ceased. The men had gathered into one heavily breathing crowd. All around were wild, insane eyes.

"Drag him along, drag him along!" Someone was ordering in the crowd. Rough hands snatched Kozloff by the leg, pulled him off his trembling horse and hauled him towards the forests. Jelieskin never left Kozloff's side. He did not touch him and stared at him dully, with a pale, horrified face.

"Brothers, what are you doing?" Kozloff exclaimed, with tears in his voice. "I have a wife and children."

"Tie him to a tree. There, so. To this oak. Twist his hands back firmly."

"What are you going to do with me? Why?" Kozloff exclaimed.

"Haven't you drunk enough of our blood?"

The men crushed together, trod on each other's feet, stumbled, fell, got up again and pushed on further, panting heavily.

"Where is the rope?" someone asked in a business-like tone.

"Look in the cart, I think it was there."

"Shall we torture him first or finish him off at once?" asked a young fellow, bareheaded with dishevelled hair.

A solitary shot was heard.

"The sailor has settled with the Ensign," someone said close to Kozloff. "He shot him with his revolver."

"Shall we begin?" The men were trembling and had lost all human aspect. They spoke mechanically and in broken sentences. None of them understood what they said and what they did.

"We must strip him first."

"No, we can finish him off so."

"No, he must certainly be undressed. Why should his tunic be lost, it is brand-new."

Kozloff's tunic was pulled off.

"Wait, comrades, and the boots."

"You are damned sharp! You imagine they'll be yours."

"They are first-class. Let us toss for them. Haul them off, I tell you."

Without stopping Kozloff's boots were dragged off. He no longer walked himself, the men shoved him towards the forest.

"No, take his trousers off."

"His trousers? And what for?"

"What for? And his watch? And his money?"

Kozloff, half naked, bare-footed, was tied to the trunk of

a tree. He looked at the men with wide-open eyes, full of suffering.

Jelieskin stood before him, gazing at him with pity or bewilderment.

"Well, shall we try him?" he asked hesitatingly, addressing himself to the crowd.

"And who preached the war? Eh? To the victorious end, eh?" voices were heard saying.

"Shall we shoot him?"

"It is not sufficient to shoot him!"

"Wait a bit, comrades. How were we taught?" exclaimed a young dishevelled soldier, placing himself in fencing position a step and a half from Kozloff.

"Thrust forward and butt to the rear!" commanded one of the men laughing.

A terrible, sharp pain contracted Kozloff's body. The bayonet had passed through his stomach and entered the tree. The soldier turned the rifle round fiercely and with the butt-end hit Kozloff in the face. The bones cracked. The nose, the mouth were one bloody spot, out of which the eyes, which were yet alive and had half dropped out of their sockets, gazed in horror and suffering. Kozloff began to sink to the ground with an agonized groan.

"Finish him off," someone shouted. Several shots were fired at Kozloff's shapeless, bloody face and he was silent.

"Now, comrades, hurry along into the village. Ours are there already. The fun has begun."

They all rushed away.

"Kill the Jews," someone shouted in the crowd. The soldiers were dragging Jewish women, girls and youths into the wood. An invisible force was drawing the men towards the spot where innocent blood had been shed, where, tied to an oak, bending forward, was the motionless, terrible Kozloff, where lay the dead bodies of the Captain, of the Ensign and of the six young officers, with their shoulder-straps torn off, with their skulls smashed by the shots.

There, among the dead bodies, the soldiers in groups of fifteen to twenty men were swarming and bustling, accomplishing their evil deed. From there came groans of pain, hysterical laughter, women's sobs, prayers for mercy, coarse laughter and fierce jokes. The beasts were feasting and revelling over their prey.

Beyond the bridge, crouching near the water edge, sat Wertzinsky. He rested his head on his hand and gazed dully at the dark, flowing river, repeating mechanically the words of the Marseillaise. Although the oak-grove on the other side was quiet and peaceful, Wertzinsky thought he still heard the moans of the martyred officers, Kozloff's agonized death-groans and the cries of the miserable women. He thought he could distinguish their white, motionless bodies lying on the grass between the trees.

"What is it? What is it?" he murmured. "It is not a revolution, but a mutiny, a Russian mutiny; as Pushkin had already said: 'The Russian mutiny is meaningless and merciless.' And this is only the beginning."

"Your Honour," he heard a voice speaking over him. Standing upright before him, saluting him, was the very soldier who had killed Kozloff.

Wertzinsky looked at him.

"The regiment begs Your Honour to lead it to the position."

Wertzinsky sighed and rising obediently ascended the slope leading to the road, where, in the falling dusk, the companies stood silent and in full order.

He thrust his hands deep into his trousers' pockets and bending his head marched before the regiment.

The Morochenensky regiment reached the positions after ten o'clock of the evening. Two battalions were to stay in the dug-outs in the forest and two were to occupy the trenches.

Wertzinsky was received by the Commander of the Pavlinovsky regiment, a young officer of the General Staff, and by the chairman of the soldiers' committee, an educated intelli-

gent Jew, a young fellow with a pale, delicate face and large prominent eyes and sensual lips. He wore a coat without shoulder-straps and did not wait for Wertzinsky to shake hands with him, but stretched his hand out first. A petroleum lamp was burning in the dug-out, which was silent as a grave and smelt strongly of earth and cold tobacco smoke.

"Why so late, comrade!" asked the officer of the General Staff. "We heard a fierce firing going on in the rear and we thought the German aeroplanes had attacked you."

Wertzinsky before answering threw an expressive glance at the chairman of the committee.

"You may speak before the comrade Zonnenfeld. I have no mysteries and secrets from the soldiers. We have pledged ourselves to serve in full brotherhood under the red banners of the revolution," the Commander of the regiment said.

"The fact is," Wertzinsky said, "that although we have come to relieve you I don't know whether you will accept us. We have come without cartridges, without the Commander of the regiment and almost without officers."

"And why it is so?" the Commander of the Pavlinovsky regiment asked.

"Some of the cartridges have been thrown into the river, others have been fired off into the air; Colonel Kozloff, Captain Pushkin, Lieutenant Zveginetsky and six officers have been killed by the men; about forty officers have run away and I can't tell you exactly who is here and who is missing."

"That was to be expected," Zonnenfeld said and gazed fixedly at Wertzinsky.

"Yes," the Commander of the Pavlinovsky regiment said, "Kozloff tried the men's patience. He was too much for the old customs. He did not understand the new revolutionary soldier and he has paid for it. God bless his soul. Naturally one feels sorry for him, but he would always have it his own way and he would not admit the soldiers' free will."

"That is not all the men have done," Wertzinsky said bitterly. "Having committed this murder they rushed into the

small town of Dalin and sacked it. I don't exactly know what happened there, but the women were being tormented till the evening and their bodies lying under the bridge in the wood."

"How disgraceful!" Zonnenfeld exclaimed. "Why did you not stop them?"

"I should like to have seen you stopping them!" said Wertzinsky.

"You should have used your arms against them."

"I have never used arms against anyone; such are my convictions."

"Plehanoff's tactic," Zonnenfeld said mockingly.

"I shall not begin a dispute on principles with you, comrade—you have two standards: one for the officers, the other for Jews and Jewish women. You are a Bolshevik, a follower of Lenin, blood does not repel you. And for me, comrade, any murder is equally disgusting and monstrous, so let us stop this conversation."

"The first is an execution, maybe a cruel and an unjust one, but execution is the vengeance of the people. The second is a senseless, savage murder, Russian bestiality," Zonnenfeld retorted hotly.

"Stop, comrade," the Commander said. "Let us admit that capital punishment will be recognized as necessary in view of the violence inflicted on the population. It is indispensable for us, Captain, to establish who is responsible for it all."

"I think it is utterly impossible to do so—it was the work of a whole crowd. Out of a thousand five hundred men I should say that only five hundred kept away."

"Mr. Colonel," Zonnenfeld said, "I think that the right thing to do would be to give the whole case over to the committee of the Army and to the political commissar; he will know how to deal with it and how to judge it not from the judicial point of view, but from the revolutionary standard. The men guilty of the 'pogrom' must be severely punished, but it is impossible to have a thousand men shot or even tried. It is necessary to separate the instigators and the chief partici-

pants and the committee of the regiment will establish this."

"I shall not discuss or examine this case," Wertzinsky said in a tired voice. "I have another question to ask: the men are preparing to go into the trenches, but they have no cartridges. They have no officers."

"I'll help you; I will give you half of my cartridges, but really it is of no importance," said the Commander of the regiment. "We are no longer at war with the Germans, neither we nor they do any shooting. Each day conversations and truck are carried on between the front lines. Yesterday my men exchanged a machine-gun for a bottle of rum, and it was such horrid stuff. I reported to the Staff. Our honourable Abraham Petrovitch gave order to note the machine-gun as lost in fighting. There are many who speak Russian among the Germans, so our men talk with them about making peace. It is not a front, but an idyl. To my knowledge there is but one company against our regiment; they have ceased counting with us and they do not think of attacking us. And the fact of our having or not having cartridges makes no difference, the men having settled definitely that they would fight no more."

When Wertzinsky was left alone he threw himself down in his overcoat on the dirty hay-sack, which he had inherited from the Pavlinovsky regiment, and shut his eyes. He groaned and turned to the wall. He was persecuted by the vision of a little girl. He had seen her when he was running from the oak-forest towards the bridge. She was a child of twelve, with long, golden-brown hair, with large black eyes, shaded by long lashes. She looked strong and healthy. Four soldiers were carrying her. Her red petticoats were turned up and showed her small feet and her legs in black stockings. She was screaming and moaning and her open lips uncovered her pretty, even, white teeth. An old man and an old woman were running after them. They had forgotten everything in their wild grief, they scolded and beat the soldiers' backs with their bony, knotted fists and their thin, clinging fingers, as the bones of a skeleton,

clung to the men's shirts. "Did these people come from palaces? And who were the executioners?"

Wertzinsky sat up on his bed. All his body was aching and shook and shivered with ague.

"It is because I have not taken off these damned rattles." He took off his ammunition belt, his overcoat, his clothes and his boots, and remained in his underwear.

The light of a clear dawn penetrated the narrow windows and the open door. The place was full of soldiers and they could be seen crowding on the steps outside in the bluish-grey light. They were pale and brought with them the heavy odour of sweat and of exhausted human beings. They were thrusting some kind of notes at Wertzinsky saying:

"Mr. Captain, here are the names of the instigators from all the companies. The second company is to blame. We, honour bright, are innocent. We wanted to deliver the officers and we know nothing about the Jews, we even ran away. And here are the boots, wear them, Mr. Captain, they are strong and new; and don't think we took a thing, oh, dear no! We are sending the fellows to bury them, that is, the victims of this revolution and we want to send for the priest. We will swear on our honour that we are perfectly innocent, in spirit and in body! As before the Almighty. It is only the second company, and the sailor, God knows where he came from."

Wertzinsky looked at them and the senseless smile of a madman contorted his clean-shaven mouth.

"Send everything to the division Headquarters. I don't know anything," he said.

"Very well, Mr. Captain," the men answered obediently and left the dug-out. The slanting rays of the festive summer-sun and the joyful twitter of the forest birds penetrated into the dug-out.

Wertzinsky fell on his couch and dropped into a sound, dreamless sleep. . . .

* * * * *

It was decided in the corps Headquarters that the murder of the Commander of the regiment as well as that of the officers and the sacking of the small town of Dalin should be submitted not to the Court of Inquiry for important cases, but to the army committees; it was decided also to send the commissar of the army with a Cossack regiment and machine-guns for the capture of the criminals. This case was neither exceptional nor the only one of its kind. Excesses of the same nature had occurred in different places and practice had shown that the Court of Inquiry remained without results. Instructions had been received from the War minister regarding such cases. It was advised to proceed with utmost caution, so as not to irritate the soldiers.

The "Praporshchik" Knoop was the Commissar of the army. The revolutionary wave had carried him first to the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workmen's deputies as a delegate of the regiment, then he had joined the Executive Committee of this Soviet, known as the "Ispolkim," and after the revolution in April in which he had played a leading part directing the soldiers he had been sent as Commissar to the Army. The same Knoop who had struggled against discipline and order in the Reserve battalion and against Captain Savelieff and who had sung chansonettes at Countess Paltoff's evening party was now a person whose importance equaled that of the Commander of the Army. He disposed of the motor-cars; if he had no regular aide-de-camps, there were always obliging members of the local Sovdep and of the Committee of the Army only too eager to serve one of their own people. Some of the Corps Commanders, the Commanders of the Division, the Commanders of the Regiments ignored him, others flattered him, seeking his help and hoping to restore the regiments with his assistance. There were ample reasons to turn a head much steadier than Knoop's. He became most important; he dressed at the best Petrograd tailors, ordered himself an elegant tunic, breeches and copied in manners and speech his idol—Kerensky.

When the bloody event which had taken place in the Morochnensky regiment became known to the Staff of the Army, Knoop came to the meeting of the local Sovdep, made a fiery report and obtained the assurance of the local Sovdep's support as well as its promise to confirm all his decisions. The corps Headquarters had been informed by telegraph of his arrival and the best car of the garage of the Army was put at his disposal. It was decided to meet him as if he were the Commander of the Army.

The car, driven by two educated looking youths, drove up smartly and stopped. Knoop threw off his coat carelessly, in a manner studied and copied from the old Generals. He then turned towards the entrance. The officer on duty reported.

"How do you do, General?" Knoop said reaching out his big, well-kept hand, with its polished nails. "I think we will start at once. Are the men assembled?"

"The soldiers are on the bivouac. The battalions which occupied the lines have refused to be relieved. The 806th regiment is in the reserve. They have confessed. All the names of the instigators have been taken down and I don't doubt that they will be given up."

Knoop, who had been invited to take the place at the head of the table, sat in a negligent attitude, drinking tea and eating the sandwiches which had been prepared for him.

"You need not go," he said patronizingly to the Corps Commander. "It is too much honour for these scoundrels. We will go with the Division Commander. Are the Cossacks ready?"

"The bivouac is surrounded and the machine-guns are placed," said the Commander of the Cossack regiment, gloomily, looking at Knoop with unconcealed hatred.

"Then let us start," Knoop said rising.

The mounted Cossacks surrounded his car; and escorted by them he drove towards the wood. It was a hot August day. Rosy-white, fluffy clouds floated on the blue sky and it seemed clear and high. The road was bordered with slender red-

yellow pines, under which pink heather was withering and the strong perfume of resin, moss, pines and juniper was poisoned at times by the odour of decaying bodies of dead horses. Barbed wire and the crumbling trenches of the reserve which had not been repaired for a long time became visible. The car entered a forest-glade where several low huts were scattered about. Two battalions were standing in lines. The men were unarmed. All around in the forest crowded soldiers of the 806th regiment; they had come to watch the execution. Mounted Cossacks with drawn swords were dispersed on the outskirts of the forest. The Sotnia of the reserve, also on horseback, stood facing the battalion.

The command of "attention" was given and the battalions were quiet. Dead silence reigned in the glade. Knoop got out of the car, which drove away puffing and creaking. He advanced towards the 1st battalion escorted by the Cossacks and by a small suite, carrying his head high, walking awkwardly with careless steps over the moss and the heather. Tchoutchkin, Kozloff's Lieutenant-Colonel, who having been in the baggage train had had the good fortune to escape the fate of the other officers, was now in command of the regiment and had come to meet his chiefs. He was a man of fifty, a good soldier, whose severe face clearly expressed that he was a man of duty.

Knoop stopped at a distance of five steps from the battalion. He clenched his fists and shouted:

"Scoundrels! did you imagine that freedom has been given you, so that you might kill, plunder and commit deeds of violence? We don't establish an English or German régime, but a Democratic-Republic in the full sense of the term. You are the free-est soldiers of the world! And how did you use the freedom you had been given?"

"You have killed faithful servants of the Republic and you have degraded yourselves to plunderings. You, you. . . . You are not free soldiers—citizens, but mutinous slaves! And you will be dealt with as such. I am a member of the Executive Committee of the Soldiers' and Workmen's deputies and I

demand," he shrieked, "I demand that you deliver me immediately the scoundrels who instigated you to rebel."

Knoop stopped speaking. No one stirred, not one single voice was lifted in the battalion.

"Have the instigators been delivered?" the Division Commander asked addressing himself to Tchoutchkin.

"Yes, Your Excellency," the Colonel said.

"Have them called," Knoop said.

Tchoutchkin didn't move, as if it didn't concern him.

"Call them out, Colonel," the Division Commander said.

Tchoutchkin stepped forward in front of Knoop and began calling out loudly and distinctly from memory the soldiers' names.

Very slowly and reluctantly the soldiers left the ranks of the 2nd company and formed a line in front of the battalion. They were young fellows of unmilitary appearance, for the most part not peasants, but towns-people. They were eighteen in number.

"And besides these," Tchoutchkin said, "there are two more, Krotoff and Lunchakoff, who are on the position. They have been sent for."

"Have these blackguards arrested!" Knoop shouted fiercely.

"Comrades! What is all this?" screamed one of the instigators.

"We shan't give them up!" exclaimed several voices in the battalion and hundreds of clenched fists were lifted overhead, but no one moved from his place.

"Cossacks!" the Division Commander said.

The mounted "sotnia" rode up to the battalion, all the hands were lowered and silence reigned once more.

"Take them in charge," Knoop said to the Cossack officer.

The officer glanced at him gloomily, surrounded the men who had been called out with his Cossacks and led them away.

It was so intensely silent in the forest that one could hear on the heather the rustle of the retreating men's steps. Knoop felt like Gulliver in the land of Lilliputians.

"Dismiss the battalion," he said to the Division Commander softly, "I will speak separately with the men."

"Dismiss the men," the Division Commander said to Tchoutchkin.

"It is better not to do so, Your Excellency," said Tchoutchkin, looking at the men anxiously.

"It is nothing; dismiss them. I know what I am doing," Knoop said.

"Dismissed!" commanded Tchoutchkin.

The two grey squares of the battalion columns dispersed and small groups of men covered the glade. Some surrounded the Cossacks and began talking to them, others walked in crowds behind Knoop. He stopped near a big fir-tree and standing on its roots, looked down at the mob of soldiers facing him. He imagined himself to be a new Christ, a preacher of a new religion, surrounded by the people, thirsting for his vivifying words.

"That fellow's speech was not a democratic one," said a Cossack. "Scoundrels! we have heard enough of that during the old régime."

The Cossack officers reported these speeches to their Commander; he assembled his regiment and went to find Knoop.

"I would advise you to go away," he said, "you have done your duty, you have taken the instigators, and all these speeches will only make matters worse."

Knoop frowned scornfully.

"Oh," he said, "you don't understand a soldier's soul. It is absolutely necessary to dispel all this darkness; the soldier must be convinced that he is wrong."

The Colonel ordered the chauffeurs to bring up the car. At the same time an officer, pale and agitated, approached Knoop and said, looking at him, but addressing himself to the Division Commander:

"Your Excellency, the battalions which occupied the position have left it and are advancing in lines and in battle formation.

They have opened fire. I ordered the Cossack machine-gunners to shoot at them. They have refused to obey."

"How? They have left the position?" Knoop exclaimed wrathfully. "That is a crime. I will show these villains what it is to uncover the front. Where is the position, Colonel? Take me there."

"You had better not go," exclaimed the Commander of the Cossack regiment.

"I will go," Knoop said stubbornly. "It is my duty to bring these scoundrels back to their senses."

He got into the car with the Division Commander.

The car moved, when a piercing voice rose above all the other noises:

"To your arms!"

Armed men came rushing out of the dug-outs. They surrounded the glade closely and blocked all the passages. The anti-aeroplane gun boomed as a call to rebellion and immediately the disorderly firing of over three thousand rifles echoed in the forest. The rifles were fired into the air. The entire mass of the Cossack regiment rushed forward and, drawing the officers after it, galloped towards the road passing between the barbed wire of the position of the reserve. The road was narrow and the dazed Cossacks dashed straight at the barbed wire; the horses fell entangled between the piles, the bullets buzzed over them, breaking the branches of the trees and increasing the panic. But not all discharged their rifles into the air. Some of the men shot at the car in which Knoop and the Division Commander were sitting, as well as at the group of horsemen among whom were the Commander of the Cossack regiment and his aide. The Cossack orderlies had left them. The car which was about to turn onto the road leading to the position was stopped by the chauffeurs who jumped out and ran towards the huts and hid behind them. Knoop and the Division Commander jumped out after them. The Division Commander gripped the Commander of the Cossack regiment's stirrup and holding on ran beside him after the Cossacks.

Knoop rushed towards the hut. But the soldiers who had been standing before it ran in first and closed the door from inside. Knoop remained standing on the small porch. He was pale. His eyes expressed the fear of a tracked animal. A soldier with the flat, broad face and the hands of a monkey, dealt him a blow on the head with the butt-end of his gun and Knoop fell face downwards near the door. Several shots fired at the back of his head finished him off. The soldiers were accomplishing everything silently, gravely, in a business-like way. Knoop remained lying on the porch.

The Commander of the regiment, Tchoutchkin, had hidden in a dark corner of the hut. The soldiers rushed in after him.

"Here he is," shouted a fine-looking fellow with the Cross of St. George. "Haul him out, comrades."

The Colonel, grey-haired, with a dishevelled beard, in a tunic with shoulder-straps, with a sword and a revolver, dropped most unexpectedly on his knees.

"Mercy, brothers," he implored, in a sobbing voice. "Have pity, I'm not in fault. I have always been on your side."

"Drag him out," came the fierce order given by the same soldier who had just killed Knoop.

Rough hands grabbed Tchoutchkin and hauled him to the door.

"Brothers," he begged, "in Christ's name have mercy on me."

"Hark whom he has remembered. Christ!" said a soldier with a pale, idiotic face, a mere lad. "And do you believe He really was Christ? Eh?"

"Let us crucify him as Christ was crucified. Then he will soon know," another soldier suggested.

"We haven't any nails," remarked one of the men who was pushing Tchoutchkin along.

"He does look like Christ, only his beard is grey. Well, he is an old Christ."

"Let us crucify him here, to this wall."

A small chapel had been erected in the forest out of fresh

pine trunks. Formerly mass had been celebrated in it by the priest on duty. Before the revolution soldiers had decorated it with carvings, and ikons, painted by officers, were hanging in it. It was here that the men brought Tchoutchkin.

"Brothers," he implored, "you are soldiers and not murderers. We have fought together."

"Well, shall we crucify him?" asked a tall soldier smilingly, holding Tchoutchkin to the wall. "It's the right place."

"Haven't you heard, that we have no nails large enough?"

"What do we need nails for?" drawled the soldier who had killed Knoop. "Bayonets are just as good as nails. Pull his hands up. Lift him!"

A bayonet was thrust into the open palm and then torn off the rifle. The fingers instinctively closed and caught hold of the bayonet. A second bayonet pierced his left hand and he half hung down, supported by a strong, bearded soldier of the reserve. The man looked at him with grave thoughtful, gentle eyes; he had looked in the same way at the oxen and the sheep which were brought to be slaughtered.

The third bayonet pierced Tchoutchkin's breast right in the middle and penetrated deep into the planks.

"One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water," muttered Tchoutchkin hoarsely, but distinctly.

"Will you be silent, old dog," the soldier who had killed Knoop screamed passionately.

Tchoutchkin lifted his head which had dropped onto his breast and looked straight into the man's eyes, murmuring: "Amen, amen, amen."

ANNOUNCEMENT OF A. F. KERENSKI IN THE SOVIET OF WORKERS' DEPUTIES

FROM

"DOCUMENTS OF RUSSIAN HISTORY, 1914-1917"

BY FRANK ALFRED GOLDER

After the organization of the new Government, the Minister of Justice, A. F. Kerenski, appeared at the meeting of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies and asked special permission to say a few words. It was granted, and this is what he said:

"Comrades! Do you believe in me? ("We believe, we believe!") I speak from the bottom of my heart, and I am ready to die if need be. (Cheers, applause, and prolonged ovation.) In view of the formation of the new Ministry and the offer that was made me to accept the portfolio of the Ministry of Justice, I was obliged to give an immediate answer without waiting for your formal approval. (Noisy applause, general enthusiasm.) Comrades, the representatives of the old Government were in my hands and I could not make up my mind to let them out of my hands. (Cheers and shouts: "That's right.") I accepted the offer made me and entered the new Government as Minister of Justice. (Cheers, applause, and shouts: "Bravo!") My first official act was to give an order to free all political prisoners, without exception, and to bring from Siberia, with special honor, our fellow deputies, the Social-Democrats (of Second and Fourth Duma). (Loud applause, general enthusiasm.)

Considering the fact that I took upon myself the duties of the Ministry of Justice before having received your formal sanction, I resign from the office of Vice-President of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies. But I am ready to accept this

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honor at your hands again, if you desire it. (Stormy applause.) Comrades, in going into the new Ministry, I am as I have always been, a republican. (Loud applause.) I gave notice to the Provisional Government that I am in its midst as representative of democracy, the exponent of democratic demands, that it must take into consideration my opinions, which I shall present as the spokesman of the democracy which has overthrown the old régime. Comrades, time does not wait; every moment is precious; and I call on you to organize, to establish discipline, to support us, your representatives, ready to die for the people and to give their whole life for the people."

Friday, March 16, 1917

FIRST PROCLAMATION BY THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF RUSSIA TO THE PEOPLE

Citizens:—The Executive Committee of the Duma, with the aid and support of the garrison of the capital and its inhabitants, has succeeded in triumphing over the obnoxious forces of the old régime in such a manner that we are able to proceed to a more stable organization of the executive power with men whose past political activity assures them the country's confidence:

The names of the members of the new government are then given, and the appeal continues:—

The new Cabinet will base its policy on the following principles:—

First—An immediate general amnesty for all political and religious offences, including terrorist acts and military and agrarian" offences.

Second—Liberty of speech and of the press, freedom for alliances, unions and strikes, with the extension of these liberties to military officials within the limits admitted by military requirements.

Third—Abolition of all social, religious and national restrictions.

Fourth—To proceed forthwith to the preparation and convocation of a constitutional Assembly, based on universal suffrage, which will establish a governmental régime.

Fifth—The substitution for the police of a national militia, with chiefs to be elected and responsible to the government.

Sixth—Communal elections to be based on universal suffrage.

Seventh—The troops which participated in the revolutionary movement will not be disarmed, but will remain in Petrograd.

Eighth—While maintaining strict military discipline for troops on active service, it is desirable to abrogate for soldiers all restrictions in the enjoyment of social rights accorded other citizens.

The provisional government desires to add that it has not intention to profit by the circumstances of the war to delay the realization of the measures of reform above mentioned.

LENIN'S SPEECH

(MEETING OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET—NOV. 8, 1917)

FROM

"DOCUMENTS OF RUSSIAN HISTORY, 1914-1917"

BY FRANK ALFRED GOLDER

Comrades, the workmen's and peasants' revolution, the need of which the Bolsheviks have emphasized many times, has come to pass.

What is the significance of this revolution? Its significance is in the first place, that we shall have a soviet government, without the participation of bourgeoisie of any kind. The oppressed masses will of themselves form a government. The old state machinery will be smashed into bits and in its place will be created a new machinery of government by the soviet organizations. From now on there is a new page in the history of Russia, and the present, third Russian revolution shall in its final result lead to the victory of Socialism.

One of our immediate tasks is to put an end to the war at once. But in order to end the war, which is closely bound up with the present capitalistic system, it is necessary to overthrow capitalism itself. In this work we shall have the aid of the world labor movement, which has already begun to develop in Italy, England, and Germany.

A just and immediate offer of peace by us to the international democracy will find everywhere a warm response among the international proletariat masses. In order to secure the confidence of the proletariat, it is necessary to publish at once all secret treaties.

In the interior of Russia a very large part of the peasantry

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has said: Enough playing with the capitalists; we will go with the workers. We shall secure the confidence of the peasants by one decree, which will wipe out the private property of the landowners. The peasants will understand that their only salvation is in union with the workers.

We will establish a real labor control on production.

We have now learned to work together in a friendly manner, as is evident from this revolution. We have the force of mass organization which has conquered all and which will lead the proletariat to world revolution.

We should now occupy ourselves in Russia in building up a proletarian socialist state.

Long live the world-wide socialistic revolution.

STREET SCENES—PETROGRAD

FROM

"FRAGMENTS FROM MY DIARY" BY MAXIM GORKY

(Translated by Barrett H. Clark and Marie Zakrevsky)

1919.

In the spring of this year, during the first warm days, weird, fantastic people crawled out on the streets of Petrograd. Where and how had they lived hitherto? Doubtless in some slum, in old, solitary crumbling houses, hidden away from life, insulted and rejected by the world. One dominant thought cropped up in my mind every time I saw them; they have forgotten something and are trying to recall it, silently crawling about the town in search of it.

They were dressed in worn-out, tattered clothes, they were dirty and evidently very hungry, but they did not look like beggars and did not ask for alms. Very silently, very carefully they walked along, watching the ordinary passers-by with suspicion and curiosity. As they stopped before the shop-windows, they examined the things exhibited in them with the eyes of folk who are trying to discover—or remember—what use one made of all those things. Motorcars terrified them, as they terrified country men and women twenty years ago.

* * * * *

A tall, dark-faced old man with sunken eyes, a crooked nose and a greenish beard, politely lifting a crumpled hat with a hole in the brim, and pointing his long finger at a disappearing motorcar, asks a passer-by:

"Electricity? Ah! . . . Thank you."

He walks on with his chest stuck out, his head held high, never stepping aside to let another man pass, and glancing at

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the people he meets with a repulsive look in his half-closed eyes. He is bare-footed, and as he touches the stones of the pavement with the soles of his feet he clenches his toes, as though testing the stability of the stones. An idle young loafer briskly accosts him:

"Who are you, daddy?"

"A man, most probably."

"Russian?"

"All my life."

"In the army?"

"Perhaps."

Then, scrutinising the youth, he asks in his turn:

"Making revolution?"

"Done it already!"

"Ah . . ."

The old man turns away and begins inspecting the shop-window of a second-hand bookseller, his beard tightly clasped in his left hand. The youth still loafing round, asks him something again; but the old man, without glancing at him, only says in a low quiet tone:

"Go away."

* * * * *

In Simeonevski street, pressed against the church gate, stands a woman of about forty. Her yellow face is swollen so that one can hardly see her eyes, her mouth is half-open, as though she were gasping for breath. Her bare feet are covered with a thick layer of dry mud. She is wrapped in a light, cotton, man's dressing-gown, her hands are folded across her breast, and her head is crowned by a straw hat with crumpled leaves and one cherry—there was a whole bunch of cherries there once, but only one has survived: the rest are just stems and broken fragments that glitter like glass.

Puckering her thick, beautifully curved eyebrows, she watches intently the people squeezing into the tram-cars, jumping from the platforms and scattering as they alight. The

woman's lips twitch, as though she were counting the people. Or perhaps she is expecting someone and is practising the words that she must say when they meet. Between the red, narrow clefts of her swollen eyes gleams an unkind, stern and cutting look. With disgust she brushes aside the street urchins who are selling cigarettes, several times she has even pushed them aside with a quick gesture of elbow or hip.

Someone asks her in a low voice: "Maybe you need some help?"

She measures the intruder with an angry glance and answers, equally low: "What makes you think so?"

"Pardon me . . ."

A neat little old woman in a lace cap is standing at her side, selling pastries made of hemp or clay. The strange woman addresses her:

"Are you a lady?"

"I am of the shopkeeping class."

"Ah . . . How many inhabitants are there in the town?"

"I don't know. A good many."

"Yes, it is terrible how many . . ."

"You are a stranger in this town?"

"I? No. I come from here . . ."

She sways, and nodding to the old woman moves towards the circus; at her side, leaning on a stick, is a big ponderous old woman who breathes heavily; she has a stone-cut face, wears round, black spectacles, and is dressed in the remnants of a fur coat, in rags of silk and grey fur.

Passing by, I can hear the hoarse voice and the sharp, cutting words:

"The last decent man in this town died nineteen years ago . . ."

And the old woman screams, like a deaf beldame:

"The Palace of Justice has been burnt down. I went to look, the walls alone remain. All burnt down. God's punishment! . . ."

The woman in the enormous shoes leans over and says loudly in her ear:

"All my people are in prison. All."

It seemed to me that she was laughing.

* * * *

A small, very hairy little man with the face of a monkey and a squashed nose is walking along, almost running, with quick, short steps. The dark-blue pupils of his eyes are anxiously dilated; the white of the eye surrounds them with a fine, opaline circle. The nankin cloak apparently does not belong to him; the edge of it is turned up unevenly, hanging like a fringe, as though a dog had been worrying it. On his feet he wears felt shoes that are worn down at the heels, and he has no hat; a grey shaggy mane stands upright on his head, a thick strongly peppered beard grows disorderly from under his eyes, his cheek-bones, his ears. He is scuttering about and muttering something, anxiously, brandishing his hands frequently, and interlacing his fingers tightly.

On the square near the Narodni Dom he addresses the soldiers:

"You must understand—it is you most of all who must understand this: a man is happy only when he recollects the fact that the life of a man is brief, and he has reconciled himself to it . . ."

He speaks very low, in a little thin voice, although from his appearance one would have expected him to growl. He shifts from one foot to the other, one of his hands is pressed to his heart, and with his other hand he gesticulates from the wrist as though conducting an orchestra; his hands are hairy, too, dark clusters growing on his fingers between the joints. In front of him, on the bench, three soldiers are chewing sunflower seeds, spitting the husks at the stomach and feet of the speaker; a fourth soldier, with a crimson hole in his cheek, is smoking and trying to blow smoke rings on to the orator's nose.

"I maintain that it is useless to rouse in us, the people, the hope of a better life; it is inhuman and criminal, it is like roasting people over a slow fire . . ."

The soldier spits on his cigarette-end, throws it up in the air with a flick of his fingers, and stretching out his legs, asks:

"Who hired you?"

"What? Me?"

"Yes, you. Who hired you?"

"What do you mean by hired?"

"I mean what I say. Hired by the bourgeoisie, or by the Jews?"

The man, confused, stops speaking, while one of the three soldiers lazily advises the last speaker:

"Give him a kick in the belly."

"He's not got any belly to speak of," replies the other . . .

The little man stands back, shoves his hands into his pockets, then pulls them out again, pressing them tightly together:

"I speak on my own behalf. I am not hired. I, too, have thought and read, have believed. But now I know: a man is a man only for a short while, everything must come to an end, and he . . ."

Here the soldier with the hole in his cheek shouts fiercely:

"Get out!"

The little man turns and runs, raising clouds of dust with his felt boots, while the soldier remarks to his companions:

"He thought he was giving us a fright, the skunk. As though we didn't understand him. We—understand everything, don't we?"

On the evening of the same day the little man was sitting on the bench at the Troitzki bridge:

"Try to understand," he urged his companions on the bench. "All things considered, the man of the majority, the simple-minded man, whom we look upon as a fool—he is the true builder of life. The majority of people are fools . . ."

He was listened to by a pock-marked, bandy-legged sailor,

broad and heavy, a militia man, a fat woman in a blue dress, three grey-haired men, evidently workmen, and a Jewish youth clad in black leather. The youth was excited; he kept asking in a sneaking manner:

"Maybe the proletariat is a fool, too?"

"I am speaking of the people who want very little, merely that they should be allowed to live decently."

"The bourgeois, you mean, eh?"

"Wait a bit, tovarisch!" the sailor said thickly; "let him speak . . ."

The orator gave a nod in the direction of the sailor: "Thank you."

"Don't mention it."

"A man is a fool only from the theoretic point of view, for he himself is quite satisfied with the amount of brain with which nature has endowed him, and well knows how to make use of it."

"Right," said the sailor. "Go ahead."

"He is a man only for a short time and he knows it, but he is in no way disturbed by the knowledge that some day he will have to lie down in his grave . . ."

"We've all got to die; you're right again!" the sailor repeated, winking at the leather-clad youth, and smiling broadly as though he would proclaim to the world his conviction of his own immortality.

The monkey-faced orator continued lecturing in a low voice, as though imploring his listeners to believe him:

"Man does not want an agitated life full of hopes, he is satisfied with a slowly running peaceful existence under the stars in the night . . . I say that to rouse unrealisable hopes in people who are here only for a short while, is to confuse them and make things more difficult for them. What can communism give them?"

"Ah!" said the sailor, resting his palms on his knees. Then he bent forward and rose to his feet: "Now, you come along with me!"

"Where to?" asked the hairy little man, starting back.

"That's my business. Tovarisch, I command you to follow me . . ."

"Oh, let him be," said the youth scornfully, waving his hand contemptuously.

"Follow me if you please!" the sailor repeated lower, but his pock-marked face grew darker and his eyes blinked sternly.

"I'm not afraid," said the orator, shrugging his shoulders.

The woman, making the sign of the cross, turned away; the militia man also departed, feeling the bolt of his rifle with his finger; while the other three rose to their feet so mechanically and simultaneously, that they might have possessed only one will between them. The sailor and the leather-clad youth led their prisoner towards the Peter and Paul fortress, but two passers-by, who come up with them on the bridge, persuaded them to release the philosopher.

"No—no," the sailor protested, "this poodle's got to be shown what a short time a man's got to live!"

"I'm not afraid," the poodle repeated in a low voice, looking at the water under his feet. "Only I am amazed to see how little you understand."

He turned round suddenly and walked back towards the square.

"Look out, he's going!" the sailor said; "the blighter's off. Hi! where are you off to?"

"Let him be, tovarisch, you can see he's not all there."

The sailor whistled after the hairy little man and then laughed: "Confound him! He's gone off and made no noise about it. A brave poodle . . . he must be dotty!"

* * * * *

A sharp-eyed little old man, in a rusty melon-hat and a long cloth coat with fur collar, is skipping to and fro among the crowd assembled around the Narodni Dom. He stops in front of every group and, holding his head on one side and poking the end of his ebony handled stick into the ground, listens

intently to what people are saying. He has a rosy face, as round as a ball, and the round flickering eyes of a night-bird; under his hawk's nose his grey bristling moustache stands upright, and on his chin grows a goat's cluster of light-yellow hair which he twirls with a quick movement of the three fingers of his left hand, poking it into his mouth, chewing it with his lips, and blowing it out again—"P-ph!"

He edges his shoulders through the pressing crowd of people as though hiding among them, and then suddenly his challenging, arresting voice rings out:

"I am well aware which classes it is that are specially harmful to us. . . . We must destroy them, smash them to pieces, grind their bones to dust . . ."

He is always listened to with great attention by soldiers, workmen, servants and women of pleasure, who watch him open-mouthed, as though sucking in the stimulating words. While speaking he holds his stick straight across his chest and runs his fingers rapidly along it as though he were playing on a fiddle.

"Clerks and officials of all kinds. You know yourselves what a plague and nuisance they are to us,—who are more unjust, more unmerciful, than officials? Law Court officials, Prison officials, Inland Revenue officials, Customs officials, Tax officials—they're everywhere. And what conjurers too! Aye—and like conjurers they've got whole boxes of tricks! They are in the first division, so we must destroy all officials."

At this a red-haired girl, apparently a servant, asks angrily:

"Who're you, yourself, I'd like to know? I'll be blowed if you're not an official, too!"

He hurriedly denies this, in rather a pettish tone:

"Never have I done anything against the poor people, never! I'm a fortune-teller, a diviner, I know what the future has in store for all of us . . ."

Here several of his listeners shouted to him to give an exhibition of his knowledge.

"No—it's a secret matter—you can't do it in public . . ."

And to the question, "What's going to happen to us?" he answers, casting his eyes to the ground:

"It'll turn out badly if, now that you have undertaken this thing, you do not make an end of it at once,—very bad it'll be. Bad teeth must be drawn out by the roots. All the officials must be mowed down. Also the learned people, the intelligentsia—for trying to blind our reason, giving us a penny in wages for every shilling we earn for them. Yes! We're learned, now, so they've got to listen to us, we'll put the laws on them! And they got up a 'pure water' campaign and had notices stuck all over the place with: 'Do not drink unboiled water!' Ha—ha—ha!"

It was difficult to make out whether he was laughing or sighing, for the "ha—ha—ha" came curiously from his rounded mouth.

Then, making a face, he asks, triumphantly:

"Well? And do we drink that unboiled water, or do we not, eh?"

The audience, vastly amused, roars out:

"We do—NOT!"

"And we're still alive, aren't we?"

"SURE!"

"There you are then. That's what their laws come to! See? Down with them all! . . ."

Whereupon, convinced that he has accomplished his task, he whisks out of the crowd and walks away, brandishing his stick. But coming to another group, he addresses the crowd again:

"There are two classes that are a particular plague to us . . ."

There is no doubt that he, too, has emerged from some dark corner to which life had driven him, remaining for years in solitude, crouching, accumulating anger and revenge.

* * * * *

Apparently there are not a few people who busy themselves

with rousing animosity against the intelligentsia, and I think they are mostly to be found among the domestic servant class—house-porters, butlers, cooks, and so on. After one of the meetings in the Cirque Moderne a fat, red-faced woman was telling the soldiers "how the masters live." Her story was witty and amusing, but she employed such language that three out of every ten of her words could not have been put down on paper. The soldiers laughed uproariously, and spat with gusto as they listened to the alleged doings of a doctor who was a specialist in women's diseases, of the behaviour of a Jewish lady-dentist, and the way in which an actor trained his female pupils.

"All this rabble ought to be thrashed," said a dark soldier, wearing a handkerchief tied round his neck, sternly, "thrashed to the last man."

In another group a limping man of forty, hairless as a eunuch, was shouting:

"I've spent my life in the stables, among the manure and the horses, while they live in beautiful flats, and lie on soft couches playing with lap-dogs. No more of that, I say! It's my turn to play with lap-dogs now—and as for them—they can go and work in the stables, eh?"

A young one-eyed woman, her face all burnt by vitriol, spoke terribly, mercilessly:

"Look into the Bible—are there any masters in the Bible? Of course there aren't any there. There are judges and prophets—but no masters. God himself ordered the destruction of the tribes in which there were masters, and destroyed them head by head, with the women and children and even the slaves. Because even the slaves become infected with the masters' opinions and cease to be human beings, yes!"

"Go and hang yourself, woman," someone in the crowd shouted to her. But, pressing her round bosom in her hands she went on screaming sharply: "I've been a lady's maid for eleven years and I've seen things . . ."

Certainly she had seen things which were unknown to Oc-

tave Mirbeau when he wrote his "Diary of a Lady's Maid"—if she spoke the truth, and her audience listened to her revelations without laughing, gloomily and in silence. Only when she had gone her way, red and perspiring with the excitement, did a stub-nosed little soldier, watching her disappear, remark:

"It's not for nothing that that girl got her face spoiled . . ."

PART X
AFTERMATH

AFTERMATH

10

VALLEY OF THE SHADOW

FROM

"A SHEAF" BY JOHN GALSWORTHY

*God, I am travelling out to death's sea,
I, who exulted in sunshine and laughter,
Thought not of dying—death is such waste of me!
Grant me one comfort: Leave not the hereafter
Of mankind to war, as though I had died not —
I, who in battle, my comrade's arm linking,
Shouted and sang—life in my pulses hot
Throbbing and dancing! Let not my sinking
In dark be for naught, my death a vain thing!
God, let me know it the end of man's fever!
Make my last breath a bugle call, carrying
Peace o'er the valleys and cold hills, for ever!*

DEAD MEN'S WATCH

(OVER THE PEACE CONFERENCE IN PARIS)

BY ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

*In the white and delicate city, where pleasure mates with art,
There are ghosts walking, and they are sick at heart.*

*And there are those walking that drowned in the deep seas,
With the sands in their thick hair and the weeds about their
knees.*

*And there are those walking that never will be found
By the bird in the air or the worm under the ground.*

*Thunder clamored and flame flew, and where God's creature
went
There rose but a little smoke from the grey earth foully rent.*

*And they that are not, in their thin and piteous hosts
Walk the streets by daylight, the grey, unheeded ghosts.*

*And fear is in their faces and horror in their eyes —
For he that dies in vain, a double death he dies.*

*And they whisper one to another, and they murmur their dull
pleas:
"What if the peace of the old men shall be a toothed peace?"*

*"What if the peace of the old men be made with tooth and claw,
By the strong according to his strength, as in the crimson law?"*

*"Brother, we gave our only life the crimson law to kill,
And spilled the iron chalice out upon the tortured hill.*

*"Go, sink upon his shoulder, and whisper at his ear,
And knock at the heart of each old man, that he may wake
and hear:*

*"And glide into his secret sleep and dog his feet by day,
For we have died to make the peace the old men live to slay.*

*"Scavenger birds have watched for us upon the desert plains,
Our bones are bleached in endless snows and washed with
mountain rains.*

*"And we have laid ourselves to sleep in lands we never knew,
Where strangers' feet went over us and red siroccos blew.*

*"But we said to one another, deep in our dreaming hearts:
We died to make an end that men may barter death in marts;*

*"That never again a rich man batten upon his scarlet gold —
Nor the cold silks of his women run blood from every fold.*

*"Our sons ploughing the broken fields where we have moaned
and lain,
Shall never hear the rattling drum summoning up the slain —*

*"Summoning up the living men with the seal upon their brows,
And Death behind the trumpeter, beckoning from his house.*

*"Choked with high words and wrapped in hate and weaponed
with a lie,
So we went forth in all the years, helpless to live or die.*

*"But now they make a peace for us, that the world may have
rest,
And the sun storming up the east and shattering down the west*

*"Shall rise upon a newer world that has forgot to kill:—
For this we fought and died, my brother—who remembers
still?*

*"But now the old men make the peace; busy, with crafty eyes,
They carry stones for the temple and build in cunning wise:*

*"And fear is in our hollow eyes, and fear eats at the heart,
And plucks us out of our cool graves and thrusts us in the mart.*

*"And we must walk the city streets and watch, early and late,
Lest that the peace the old men make should be a peace of
hate."*

THE CONFERENCE

FROM

"THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE PEACE" BY JOHN
MAYNARD KEYNES, C. B.

The figure and bearing of Clemenceau are universally familiar. At the Council of Four he wore a square-tailed coat of very good, thick black broadcloth, and on his hands, which were never uncovered, gray suède gloves; his boots were of thick black leather, very good, but of a country style, and sometimes fastened in front, curiously, by a buckle instead of laces. His seat in the room in the President's house, where the regular meetings of the Council of Four were held (as distinguished from their private and unattended conferences in a smaller chamber below), was on a square brocaded chair in the middle of the semicircle facing the fireplace, with Signor Orlando on his left, the President next by the fireplace, and the Prime Minister opposite on the other side of the fireplace on his right. He carried no papers and no portfolio, and was unattended by any personal secretary, though several French ministers and officials appropriate to the particular matter in hand would be present round him. His walk, his hand, and his voice were not lacking in vigor, but he bore nevertheless, especially after the attempt upon him, the aspect of a very old man conserving his strength for important occasions. He spoke seldom, leaving the initial statement of the French case to his ministers or officials; he closed his eyes often and sat back in his chair with an impassive face of parchment, his gray gloved hands clasped in front of him. A short sentence, decisive or cynical, was generally sufficient, a question, an unqualified abandonment of his ministers, whose face would not be saved,

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or a display of obstinacy reinforced by a few words in a piquantly delivered English. He alone amongst the Four could speak and understand both languages, Orlando knowing only French and the Prime Minister and President only English; and it is of historical importance that Orlando and the President had no direct means of communication.

But speech and passion were not lacking when they were wanted, and the sudden outburst of words, often followed by a fit of deep coughing from the chest, produced their impression rather by force and surprise than by persuasion.

Not infrequently Mr. Lloyd George, after delivering a speech in English, would, during the period of its interpretation into French, cross the hearthrug to the President to reinforce his case by some *ad hominem* argument in private conversation, or to sound the ground for a compromise,—and this would sometimes be the signal for a general upheaval and disorder. The President's advisers would press round him, a moment later the British experts would dribble across to learn the result or see that all was well, and next the French would be there, a little suspicious lest the others were arranging something behind them, until all the room were on their feet and conversation was general in both languages. My last and most vivid impression is of such a scene—the President and the Prime Minister as the center of a surging mob and a babel of sound, a welter of eager, impromptu compromises and counter-compromises, all sound and fury signifying nothing, on what was an unreal question anyhow, the great issues of the morning's meeting forgotten and neglected; and Clemenceau silent and aloof on the outskirts—for nothing which touched the security of France was forward—throned, in his gray gloves, on the brocade chair, dry in soul and empty of hope, very old and tired, but surveying the scene with a cynical and almost impish air; and when at last silence was restored and the company had returned to their places, it was to discover that he had disappeared.

He felt about France what Pericles felt of Athens—unique

value in her, nothing else mattering; but his theory of politics was Bismarck's. He had one illusion—France; and one disillusion—mankind, including Frenchmen, and his colleagues not least. His principles for the peace can be expressed simply. In the first place, he was a foremost believer in the view of German psychology that the German understands and can understand nothing but intimidation, that he is without generosity or remorse in negotiation, that there is no advantage he will not take of you, and no extent to which he will not demean himself for profit, that he is without honor, pride, or mercy. Therefore you must never negotiate with a German or conciliate him; you must dictate to him. On no other terms will he respect you, or will you prevent him from cheating you. But it is doubtful how far he thought these characteristics peculiar to Germany, or whether his candid view of some other nations was fundamentally different. His philosophy had, therefore, no place for "sentimentality" in international relations. Nations are real things, of whom you love one and feel for the rest indifference—or hatred. The glory of the nation you love is a desirable end,—but generally to be obtained at your neighbor's expense. The politics of power are inevitable, and there is nothing very new to learn about this war or the end it was fought for; England had destroyed, as in each preceding century, a trade rival; a mighty chapter had been closed in the secular struggle between the glories of Germany and of France. Prudence required some measure of lip service to the "ideals" of foolish Americans and hypocritical Englishmen; but it would be stupid to believe that there is much room in the world, as it really is, for such affairs as the League of Nations, or any sense in the principle of self-determination except as an ingenious formula for rearranging the balance of power in one's own interests. . . .

* * * * *

In November, 1918, the armies of Foch and the words of Wilson had brought us sudden escape from what was swallow-

ing up all we cared for. The conditions seemed favorable beyond any expectation. The victory was so complete that fear need play no part in the settlement. The enemy had laid down his arms in reliance on a solemn compact as to the general character of the Peace, the terms of which seemed to assure a settlement of justice and magnanimity and a fair hope for a restoration of the broken current of life. To make assurance certain the President was coming himself to set the seal on his work.

When President Wilson left Washington he enjoyed a prestige and a moral influence throughout the world unequaled in history. His bold and measured words carried to the peoples of Europe above and beyond the voices of their own politicians. The enemy peoples trusted him to carry out the compact he had made with them; and the Allied peoples acknowledged him not as a victor only but almost as a prophet. In addition to this moral influence the realities of power were in his hands. The American armies were at the height of their numbers, discipline, and equipment. Europe was in complete dependence on the food supplies of the United States; and financially she was even more absolutely at their mercy. Europe not only already owed the United States more than she could pay; but only a large measure of further assistance could save her from starvation and bankruptcy. Never had a philosopher held such weapons wherewith to bind the princes of this world. How the crowds of the European capitals pressed about the carriage of the President! With what curiosity, anxiety, and hope we sought a glimpse of the features and bearing of the man of destiny who, coming from the West, was to bring healing to the wounds of the ancient parent of his civilization and lay for us the foundations of the future.

The disillusion was so complete, that some of those who had trusted most hardly dared speak of it. Could it be true? they asked of those who returned from Paris. Was the Treaty really as bad as it seemed? What had happened to the Presi-

dent? What weakness or what misfortune had led to so extraordinary, so unlooked-for a betrayal?

Yet the causes were very ordinary and human. The President was not a hero or a prophet; he was not even a philosopher; but a generously intentioned man, with many of the weaknesses of other human beings, and lacking that dominating intellectual equipment which would have been necessary to cope with the subtle and dangerous spellbinders whom a tremendous clash of forces and personalities had brought to the top as triumphant masters in the swift game of give and take, face to face in Council,—a game of which he had no experience at all.

We had indeed quite a wrong idea of the President. We knew him to be solitary and aloof, and believed him very strong-willed and obstinate. We did not figure him as a man of detail, but the clearness with which he had taken hold of certain main ideas would, we thought, in combination with his tenacity, enable him to sweep through cobwebs. Besides these qualities he would have the objectivity, the cultivation, and the wide knowledge of the student. The great distinction of language which had marked his famous Notes seemed to indicate a man of lofty and powerful imagination. His portraits indicated a fine presence and a commanding delivery. With all this he had attained and held with increasing authority the first position in a country where the arts of the politician are not neglected. All of which, without expecting the impossible, seemed a fine combination of qualities for the matter in hand.

The first impression of Mr. Wilson at close quarters was to impair some but not all of these illusions. His head and features were finely cut and exactly like his photographs, and the muscles of his neck and the carriage of his head were distinguished. But, like Odysseus, the President looked wiser when he was seated; and his hands, though capable and fairly strong, were wanting in sensitiveness and finesse. The first glance at the President suggested not only that, whatever else he might be, his temperament was not primarily that of the student or the

scholar, but that he had not much even of that culture of the world which marks M. Clemenceau and Mr. Balfour as exquisitely cultivated gentlemen of their class and generation. But more serious than this, he was not only insensitive to his surroundings in the external sense, he was not sensitive to his environment at all. What chance could such a man have against Mr. Lloyd George's unerring, almost medium-like, sensibility to every one immediately round him? To see the British Prime Minister watching the company, with six or seven senses not available to ordinary men, judging character, motive, and subconscious impulse, perceiving what each was thinking and even what each was going to say next, and compounding with telepathic instinct the argument or appeal best suited to the vanity, weakness, or self-interest of his immediate auditor, was to realize that the poor President would be playing blind man's buff in that party. Never could a man have stepped into the parlor a more perfect and predestined victim to the finished accomplishments of the Prime Minister. The Old World was tough in wickedness anyhow; the Old World's heart of stone might blunt the sharpest blade of the bravest knight-errant. But this blind and deaf Don Quixote was entering a cavern where the swift and glittering blade was in the hands of the adversary.

But if the President was not the philosopher-king, what was he? After all he was a man who had spent much of his life at a University. He was by no means a business man or an ordinary party politician, but a man of force, personality, and importance. What, then, was his temperament?

The clue once found was illuminating? The President was like a Nonconformist minister, perhaps a Presbyterian. His thought and his temperament were essentially theological not intellectual, with all the strength and the weakness of that manner of thought, feeling, and expression. It is a type of which there are not now in England and Scotland such magnificent specimens as formerly; but this description, nevertheless,

will give the ordinary Englishman the distinctest impression of the President.

With this picture of him in mind, we can return to the actual course of events. The President's program for the World, as set forth in his speeches and his Notes, had displayed a spirit and a purpose so admirable that the last desire of his sympathizers was to criticize details,—the details, they felt, were quite rightly not filled in at present, but would be in due course. It was commonly believed at the commencement of the Paris Conference that the President had thought out, with the aid of a large body of advisers, a comprehensive scheme not only for the League of Nations, but for the embodiment of the Fourteen Points in an actual Treaty of Peace. But in fact the President had thought out nothing; when it came to practice his ideas were nebulous and incomplete. He had no plan, no scheme, no constructive ideas whatever for clothing with the flesh of life the commandments which he had thundered from the White House. He could have preached a sermon on any of them or have addressed a stately prayer to the Almighty for their fulfilment; but he could not frame their concrete application to the actual state of Europe.

He not only had no proposals in detail, but he was in many respects, perhaps inevitably, ill-informed as to European conditions. And not only was he ill-informed—that was true of Mr. Lloyd George also—but his mind was slow and unadaptable. The President's slowness amongst the Europeans was noteworthy. He could not, all in a minute, take in what the rest were saying, size up the situation with a glance, frame a reply, and meet the case by a slight change of ground; and he was liable, therefore, to defeat by the mere swiftness, apprehension, and agility of a Lloyd George. There can seldom have been a statesman of the first rank more incompetent than the President in the agilities of the council chamber. A moment often arrives when substantial victory is yours if by some slight appearance of a concession you can save the face of the opposition or conciliate them by a restatement of your proposal

helpful to them and not injurious to anything essential to yourself. The President was not equipped with this simple and usual artfulness. His mind was too slow and unresourceful to be ready with *any* alternatives. The President was capable of digging his toes in and refusing to budge, as he did over Fiume. But he had no other mode of defense, and it needed as a rule but little manoeuvring by his opponents to prevent matters from coming to such a head until it was too late. By pleasantness and an appearance of conciliation, the President would be manoeuvred off his ground, would miss the moment for digging his toes in, and, before he knew where he had been got to, it was too late. Besides, it is impossible month after month in intimate and ostensibly friendly converse between close associates, to be digging the toes in all the time. Victory would only have been possible to one who had always a sufficiently lively apprehension of the position as a whole to reserve his fire and know for certain the rare exact moments for decisive action. And for that the President was far too slow-minded and bewildered. . . .

These and other various causes combined to produce the following situation. The reader must remember that the processes which are here compressed into a few pages took place slowly, gradually, insidiously, over a period of about five months.

As the President had thought nothing out, the Council was generally working on the basis of a French or British draft. He had to take up, therefore, a persistent attitude of obstruction, criticism, and negation, if the draft was to become at all in line with his own ideas and purpose. If he was met on some points with apparent generosity (for there was always a safe margin of quite preposterous suggestions which no one took seriously), it was difficult for him not to yield on others. Compromise was inevitable, and never to compromise on the essential, very difficult. Besides, he was soon made to appear to be taking the German part and laid himself open to the sug-

gestion (to which he was foolishly and unfortunately sensitive) of being "pro-German."

After a display of much principle and dignity in the early days of the Council of Ten, he discovered that there were certain very important points in the program of his French, British, or Italian colleague, as the case might be, of which he was incapable of securing the surrender by the methods of secret diplomacy. What then was he to do in the last resort? He could let the Conference drag on an endless length by the exercise of sheer obstinacy. He could break it up and return to America in a rage with nothing settled. Or he could attempt an appeal to the world over the heads of the Conference. These were wretched alternatives, against each of which a great deal could be said. They were also very risky,—especially for a politician. The President's mistaken policy over the Congressional election had weakened his personal position in his own country, and it was by no means certain that the American public would support him in a position of intransigency. It would mean a campaign in which the issues would be clouded by every sort of personal and party consideration, and who could say if right would triumph in a struggle which would certainly not be decided on its merits? Besides, any open rupture with his colleagues would certainly bring upon his head the blind passions of "anti-German" resentment with which the public of all allied countries were still inspired. They would not listen to his arguments. They would not be cool enough to treat the issue as one of international morality or of the right governance of Europe. The cry would simply be that, for various sinisters and selfish reasons, the President wished "to let the Hun off." The almost unanimous voice of the French and British Press could be anticipated. Thus, if he threw down the gage publicly he might be defeated. And if he were defeated, would not the final Peace be far worse than if he were to retain his prestige and endeavor to make it as good as the limiting conditions of European politics would allow him? But above all, if he were defeated, would he not lose the League of

Nations? And was not this, after all, by far the most important issue for the future happiness of the world? The Treaty would be altered and softened by time. Much in it which now seemed so vital would become trifling, and much which was impracticable would for that very reason never happen. But the League, even in an imperfect form, was permanent; it was the first commencement of a new principle in the government of the world; Truth and Justice in international relations could not be established in a few months,—they must be born in due course by the slow gestation of the League. Clemenceau had been clever enough to let it be seen that he would swallow the League at a price.

At the crisis of his fortunes the President was a lonely man. Caught up in the toils of the Old World, he stood in great need of sympathy, of moral support, of the enthusiasm of masses. But buried in the Conference, stifled in the hot and poisoned atmosphere of Paris, no echo reached him from the outer world, and no throb of passion, sympathy, or encouragement from his silent constituents in all countries. He felt that the blaze of popularity which had greeted his arrival in Europe was already dimmed; the Paris Press jeered at him openly; his political opponents at home were taking advantage of his absence to create an atmosphere against him; England was cold, critical, and unresponsive. He had so formed his *entourage* that he did not receive through private channels the current of faith and enthusiasm of which the public sources seemed dammed up. He needed, but lacked, the added strength of collective faith. The German terror still overhung us, and even the sympathetic public was very cautious; the enemy must not be encouraged, our friends must be supported, this was not the time for discord or agitations, the President must be trusted to do his best. And in this drought the flower of the President's faith withered and dried up.

Thus it came to pass that the President countermanded the *George Washington*, which, in a moment of well-founded rage, he had ordered to be in readiness to carry him from the

treacherous halls of Paris back to the seat of his authority, where he could have felt himself again. But as soon, alas, as he had taken the road of compromise, the defects, already indicated, of his temperament and of his equipment, were fatally apparent. He could take the high line; he could practise obstinacy; he could write Notes from Sinai or Olympus; he could remain unapproachable in the White House or even in the Council of Ten and be safe. But if he once stepped down to the intimate equality of the Four, the game was evidently up.

Now it was that what I have called his theological or Presbyterian temperament became dangerous. Having decided that some concessions were unavoidable, he might have sought by firmness and address and the use of the financial power of the United States to secure as much as he could of the substance, even at some sacrifice of the letter. But the President was not capable of so clear an understanding with himself as this implied. He was too conscientious. Although compromises were now necessary, he remained a man of principle and the Fourteen Points a contract absolutely binding upon him. He would do nothing that was not honorable; he would do nothing that was not just and right; he would do nothing that was contrary to his great profession of faith. Thus, without any abatement of the verbal inspiration of the Fourteen Points, they became a document for gloss and interpretation and for all the intellectual apparatus of self-deception, by which, I daresay, the President's forefathers had persuaded themselves that the course they thought it necessary to take was consistent with every syllable of the Pentateuch.

The President's attitude to his colleagues had now become: I want to meet you so far as I can; I see your difficulties and I should like to be able to agree to what you propose; but I can do nothing that is not just and right, and you must first of all show me that what you want does really fall within the words of the pronouncements which are binding on me. Then began the weaving of that web of sophistry and Jesuitical exegesis that was finally to clothes with insincerity the language

and substance of the whole Treaty. The word was issued to the witches of all Paris:

*Fair is foul, and foul is fair,
Hover through the fog and filthy air.*

The subtlest sophisters and most hypocritical draftsmen were set to work, and produced many ingenious exercises which might have deceived for more than an hour a cleverer man than the President. . . .

At last the work was finished; and the President's conscience was still intact. In spite of everything, I believe that his temperament allowed him to leave Paris a really sincere man; and it is probable that to this day he is genuinely convinced that the Treaty contains practically nothing inconsistent with his former professions.

But the work was too complete, and to this was due the last tragic episode of the drama. The reply of Brockdorff-Rantzau inevitably took the line that Germany had laid down her arms on the basis of certain assurances, and that the Treaty in many particulars was not consistent with these assurances. But this was exactly what the President could not admit; in the sweat of solitary contemplation and with prayers to God he had done *nothing* that was not just and right; for the President to admit that the German reply had force in it was to destroy his self-respect and to disrupt the inner equipoise of his soul; and every instinct of his stubborn nature rose in self-protection. In the language of medical psychology, to suggest to the President that the Treaty was an abandonment of his professions was to touch on the raw a Freudian complex. It was a subject intolerable to discuss, and every subconscious instinct plotted to defeat its further exploration.

Thus it was that Clemenceau brought to success, what had seemed to be, a few months before, the extraordinary and impossible proposal that the Germans should not be heard. If only the President had not been so conscientious, if only he had not concealed from himself what he had been doing, even at

the last moment he was in a position to have recovered lost ground and to have achieved some very considerable successes. But the President was set. His arms and legs had been spliced by the surgeons to a certain posture, and they must be broken again before they could be altered. To his horror, Mr. Lloyd George, desiring at the last moment all the moderation he dared, discovered that he could not in five days persuade the President of error in what it had taken five months to prove to him to be just and right. After all, it was harder to debamboozle this old Presbyterian than it had been to bamboozle him; for the former involved his belief in and respect for himself.

Thus in the last act the President stood for stubbornness and a refusal of conciliations.

THE WAY TO RELEASE

FROM

"ORDERLY" BY MORRIS WERNER

One evening of one of the first days in January 1919 we were to leave Etretat forever, and the confusion and excitement were so great that there was scarcely room for regret. Packing up army packs so that they would look proper and contain all that they were supposed to contain took ingenuity and practice. All day we were at it, and some of us, including myself, could not master it without the aid of those who were better at such things, for we had not moved once since we had arrived in France, and army packs were therefore mysterious. At last, however, every man's underwear was in every man's pack, and every blanket roll was properly adjusted.

We marched to the railroad station just after twilight. Accompanying us through the streets of the town were almost all the inhabitants of Etretat. They stood behind the iron gates barring them from the stone platform and yelled sentiments and jokes at us for the last time, while we got into the compartments, some of which were in white German third class railway carriages appropriated as part of the terms of the armistice. It was dark; the lights on the station platform burned blue; there were shouts and scurrying to say goodbye to café proprietors who had proved friends or to more intimate acquaintances.

We were to go in this long train to Brest, where we would embark on a ship for the United States. Being in the clerical staff I occupied a second class compartment with three other sergeants, the bugler and an army field desk. Most of the third class compartments contained eight men, who slept sitting

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up on the hard wooden seats. We were scarcely more fortunate in our second class compartment, for the field desk occupied one third of the floor and seats. We placed our packs on the rest of the floor, and two men stretched out on the seats on either side, while I slept on the pile of packs, with the iron handle of the field desk as a pillow. Pinned down by the bodies of my companions, two on each side, I seemed to lift their weight from my chest every time I breathed, so that it was difficult to sleep. Then, too, one of the officers in the compartment which adjoined ours, and which was connected with it by a small peep window through which we could continue presenting our reports for signatures, was in the habit each night of attending to his more personal wants by perching himself on an open window, while the train wound slowly along. This made us indignant, especially since the officer in question was too ignorant of military matters to succeed in being the martinet he preferred to resemble; we cursed him, wished him constipation, and composed ourselves for sleep.

In the morning the train stopped, so that we might get out of our prisons for breakfast. Before leaving Etretat we had been joined by another organisation, so that we were now about three hundred men, and all of us rushed madly for the freight car in the middle of the train where the provisions were cooked. We received our coffee, our tins of beef, our cheese and were given time to eat them on the railroad embankment before the train started again. The trip then continued its painful slow monotony, which was all the more maddening because of the pent up excitement we all felt at the prospect of returning home at last and of being masters of ourselves soon again.

Two days and two nights we spent in our compartments, with long, wearisome stops at places where we were not permitted to move from the track next to the one on which our train was travelling. The longest stop was at Le Mans, which I remember chiefly by the coal-besotted railroad yard and the two or three hungry Morrocans who rummaged eagerly among our garbage on the chance that they might find something not

too terrible for consumption. They looked sadly out of place and singularly unhappy, with their chocolate brown sullenness, under their bright red fezes.

We ourselves were happy only at meal times, and at the prospect of ultimate release. Then, too, the scenery of Brittany, as we could see it from the one window not blocked by the field desk, was pleasantly different from our Norman scenery. There seemed to be more woods, and the men were dressed differently from those peasants to whom we had been accustomed.

We arrived in Brest early in the morning and started up the long hill that led to the American Army camp six miles from the harbour and the railroad yard. On the way we were jolly; several times we were permitted to rest in the fields by the side of the wet road, for our packs were heavy, and our shoulders were not used to them.

Arriving in the huge army camp, we were assigned to what was literally a mud flat, where unstable tents had been pitched in the soggy mud in anticipation of new arrivals. Each tent was pitched over half a tent flooring, and the other half of the space in which we lived consisted of soft, soggy mud. All around the outsides of the tents was more mud, softer and soggier, for Cape Finisterre was noted for rain. During the three weeks of our residence in the camp it rained some time during every day and night, occasionally fiercely.

I occupied a tent with three other sergeants. Our packs and blankets and clothes we spread out on the half a tent flooring, and we tried to keep out of the mud of the other half of our home as much as possible. Whenever one went out into the streets of tents, one walked in lanes of mud and settled higher than the ankles. It was impossible to keep either dry or warm. Most of the day I had to spend in the tent occupied by our adjutant and commanding officer, where I sat on a box and typed reports, for the paper work seemed to increase as the war grew less dangerous. Day and night we worked on the most complicated returns we had yet encountered, and periodic

trips to the headquarters of the camp, where an arrogant, but uncertain, captain, attempted to explain the inexplicable, were barren of comfort.

For our meals we were marched to huge tents, via muddy roads, in pouring rain. Standing up to the ankles in mud at long corrugated tin tables, such as is used for roofing, we ate out of our aluminum mess kits the heaps of meat, potatoes and other concoctions that were hurled at us from huge cauldrons as we entered. More than a thousand men stood in the dark, eating rapidly, while, to make us forget the mud, the haste, the food and the rain, a brass band played popular tunes and ancient marches. Especially at supper the scene was drably fantastic. Outside in the rain, waiting for our places at the corrugated tin tables, hundreds of others were lined up, and the band blared majestically all the while. After we had hurriedly finished our food, we passed outside and dipped our dirty mess kits rapidly into a cauldron of steaming water, on the top of which the grease of many mess kits had already accumulated. Contemplatively in the tent one tried to remove the lanes of yellow grease which the rapid dipping had not eradicated.

Seventy thousand men waiting to depart on ships were in the camp at Brest while we were there, and more arrived every hour. Thousands of negroes rushed about in hectic confusion, for the negroes were being sent home as soon as possible, at the request of the French government, which considered that France possessed more than enough mixed babies. Some of them, perhaps, may become Neo-Dumas.

Every day there were "details." These consisted of working in various parts of the huge camp to prepare it for tents and barracks for new arrivals. Tent floorings were being carried about everywhere; digging went on constantly in the mud and the rain; and the influenza rate was so high that the camp hospital was overcrowded and refused all men who did not have at least 104 degrees of temperature. This was a hardship for the sick, because, in the army, if a man is not officially sick and

admitted to hospital, he is officially capable of work and must accompany the others into the mud, the wind and the rain, and he must also go for his food to the mess tents and wait his turn in lines of mud. Many of our men became ill, and the doctors cared for them as best they could in the tents, without medicines.

At night the four of us slept on our tent floor, first scraping off as much mud as we had brought in. After midnight on the first night, a terrific gale blew over Cape Finisterre, accompanied by wild, vicious rain. Our tent blew so that we feared it would suddenly disappear into the neighbouring encampments. Two of my companions clung to the tent pole, while the other two of us rushed outside in our rain coats and tried to make tent pegs stick into oozing mud. All around us in the dark and the rain were men whose tents had blown down, or who were struggling desperately to prevent the immediate collapse of their shelter. It was pleasant in the morning to hear the hundreds of bugle calls from the neighbouring detachments, and, as some buglers had more wind than skill and others more musical talent than wind, the effect was pleasingly discordant.

When we had been in our tents for several days and nights, a general order came to us one day saying that Theodore Roosevelt, formerly President of the United States, had died, and that at 11 o'clock that morning our adjutant would line us up in the road outside our encampment and read the attached tribute. Our adjutant was nothing except prompt at things like that, though he was able to accomplish literally nothing for our comfort. We were duly lined up in the road in front of our tents, and Captain B. began to read in the bulbous voice with which he made all announcements. His words always came out as if his mouth were full of broken wind at the moment of elocution, and the result was a bewildering conglomeration of bellowing, spluttering and spit. He had just begun the tribute to the late Theodore Roosevelt, when a line of tent floorings on the tops of men's heads came along the road. We were supposed to be standing rigidly at attention, but we

could not help turning our heads to watch the approach of tent floorings, which seemed to move in the air slowly without human aid, for only the legs of the bearers were visible. They had halted when someone with free eyes had spied us in the way, and a soldier came hurrying up to our captain, with the request from his captain: What the hell were we doing blocking the road this way. Captain B., interrupted in his tribute, spluttered that we were commemorating Theodore Roosevelt. The courier rushed back to the halted tent floorings and arrived back at us a minute later with the news that his captain said that unless we got the hell out of there in two minutes, he'd run his tent floorings over our damned fool heads. Captain B. shouted dismissed, and we all scurried for our lives, leaving Theodore Roosevelt to the angels.

After about a week of tent life, we reached the next stage in the tortuous, narrow path to home: we were sent into wooden barracks, so that we might be given the thorough cleansing necessary before we would be permitted to return to the United States. The folks at home must never know that we had been dirty, and therefore the army was prodigal in its distribution of new clothes. We had all received new clothes before we left Etretat, but these were almost ruined by the mud baths of tent life and the other exertions of travel. Our new quarters were marvellous compared with what we left. There were tin roofs over our heads; the beds were of chicken wire and consisted of an upper and a lower; and the floor was of hard dirt instead of soft mud. If a button was missing from an overcoat, we hurled it on a pile of supposedly ruined garments and asked for a new one. Puttees that were slightly mud-caked hung crazily on the heap of old clothes, which grew and grew until it seemed as if no one would be able to move it. We were taken one morning to the baths, which were in huge wooden huts, and here we waited in the cold, wearing nothing but identity tags, for the hot and cold douche that was supposed to remove the last traces of France from our brave, white souls.

* * * * *

Before any detachment could leave Brest, it had to be inspected thoroughly to see that it was clean, and that each man had his full equipment. We prepared carefully for this inspection, everybody forcibly helping everybody else, for if one man was lacking one button, we might be detained another two weeks. All was confusion, and many men were missing knives, forks, spoons and buttons, when the little dark captain from the camp headquarters arrived one morning to inspect us. We spread out our belongings in uniform neatness on our beds, and we ourselves were lined up in the lanes outside our barracks, while the finicky, sour captain passed up and down finding fault. He found so much fault that he made himself furious, and he proclaimed openly that we were in no fit condition to return to the United States, and that he, for one, would never approve of our being sent home until every man had a fork. Finally, at the prayer of one of our officers, he relented, and grudgingly consented to return the next day, but we were warned that unless everything was perfect when he returned, we should probably spend the rest of our lives in Brest. That prospect was the worst conceivable; we had all heard of purgatory dimly, but we all were in Brest, and at the moment it seemed worse than any possibility an almighty imaginative god could invent. That day was the most hectic of our trip. Everybody took a personal, irascible, nagging interest in everybody else's personal appearance. We went up to each other like worried mother hens and shouted: "For Christ's sake why don't you get a new puttee." The barracks were swept until the earth floor showed a beautiful dull finish; the pile of dirty clothing—one of the inspector's chief objections to us—was removed magically; the latrines—tin garbage cans with precarious boards over their openings, which reposed too near our sleeping quarters—were made attractive by a special staff of men who seemed to have particular talent for such work. By the time the little captain arrived next morning every man looked like a second cousin to General Pershing, and we were passed forthwith.

But that did not mean that we left immediately. Day and night I sat in the officers' wooden barracks making out long lists of the names of officers and men. What there was to report in such quantities I can no longer remember, but the work kept several of us busy all the hours of the morning, the afternoon and the night until after ten, while the big Belgian police dog of one of the officers ran round our legs helplessly. Finally, our "move orders" arrived, and we were all warned that as we marched down the six miles from the camp to the docks, camp officers would be stationed all along the way, and that if we did not keep in step, if our buttons were not all buttoned, if our packs were not perfect, we should be sent back to the camp to dig ditches for another three weeks. I have never known terror such as that instilled into us by those officers in the camp at Brest. They had the one power over us which they knew to be effective: the power to keep us in Brest, and they did not seem to mind how long they themselves remained.

* * * * *

On the morning of our departure we were up while it was still dark, and of course it was still raining, a fine, thin rain, which slowly permeated one's khaki and rusted one's disposition. We started on the long march with our heavy packs at about eight o'clock on the rainy January morning, and along the march were the dreaded officers, who kept eyeing us critically, but as they said not a word of command or of cheer, we were evidently ripe for Fifth Avenue.

On the docks were large locomotives with long strings of grey freight cars; negroes were singing gently and gaily, as they unloaded sacks of flour; the terror was almost gone.

A tender took us to a long grey ship in the harbor. It was now called the *Agamemnon*, but it had been the Crown Prince something or other of Germany. The sense of freedom as we stepped on the deck of this ship was intoxicating. No one could now keep us in Brest, but we were warned not to make

rude remarks, for one detachment had been sent back to the camp from the transport for expressing its opinions of the camp officers of Brest.

In the hold, where we tumbled to deposit our packs, were flat strips of canvas, four high, attached to iron poles. Seventy of us slept in each section of the hold. We dropped our packs on the beds and rushed up on deck, joyous from the effect of clean sea air. The ship itself was beautiful—the long, narrow kind, after the fashion of the *Mauretania* and the *France*. The decks were spacious, and we were permitted everywhere except in the first dining room and the smoking room, which were reserved for officers. It was January, but as soon as we got out to sea, the air proved mild for that time of year. Now there was no longer danger of submarines, and we were permitted to smoke on deck. Many of us chose to sleep on deck in our clothes and a blanket, rather than in the sections of seventy men, which were stuffy and conducive to seasickness. But the sailors came along at five o'clock in the morning with hoses to wash down the decks. "Heads up, soldier," they shouted, and one had to come out of sleepiness fast to avoid their soaking water, for they enjoyed that type of joke. They also took a great interest in stealing our shoes, for they had black shoes, and for some reason they coveted our tan shoes. On the first day out many men were shoeless, and thereafter we slept with our shoes under our heads.

We stood in long lines on deck waiting our turns to go for our food to the dining room in the hold of the ship. I remember one night after the sun had gone down standing in line in front of a row of port holes which gave a view of the brilliantly lighted officers' dining room, where negro sailors were serving oyster stew. I felt just like a Christmas picture in "Life" for about 1911 of ragged children looking into Child's window. Our own food was seasickly. Sometimes we received sardines done in cottonseed oil, and sometimes on rough days stinking sausages. Some of the men bribed negro sailors to sell them the remains of the officers' mess, but the prices were high, for

they knew that we had all been paid before leaving Brest; they charged four dollars for a pie and fifty cents for an orange.

I find among my papers the following copy of the "Agamemnon Daily News, Published on board the U.S.S. Agamemnon in the Interest of the Crew and Passengers." It is dated Monday, February 3, 1919 and reads:

MOVIES FOR TODAY

THE LITTLE DUTCHESS—MADGE EVANS.

TWO RENEGADES

U. S. Navy Press

Washington:—Dr. Theodore T. Woop, director of Chinese educational mission and his two assistants, C. H. Hsie and Ben Sen Wu found murdered last night at home in fashionable northwest section. They were shot Wednesday and bodies were found by Chinese students. Today detectives are bringing here from New York, a highly educated Chinese, about twenty-five years old to be questioned regarding the murders. Every indication of desperate struggle, but no evidence of robbery. Police puzzled by finding no motive for crime.

Archangel:—Another violent attack by the Bolsheviki on American, Russian and British positions at Taresevo, compelled hard-pressed and outnumbered little allied column in this sector to withdraw Thursday approximately forty miles.

New York:—Lacking impulse from any quarter, trading in stocks today dwindled to insignificant proportions. Reactions from one to five points made by oils hides and leather preferred Maxwell motors New York air brake Ohio gas. U. S. Steel lost a fraction and Brooklyn transit hardened leaders in general rallying slightly at end. Closing irregular.

Saloniki:—Detachments of Allied troops have arrived at Adrianople and put end to Turkish terrorism of inhabitants which has been in progress during war. Greek inhabitants now wear hats instead of the fez which Turks forced them to wear.

After a trip of almost ten days, during which we felt content at the freedom from dirt and from work, we arrived in New York harbor. As the ship passed Coney Island we were permitted on the boat deck, where we had not been permitted during the voyage. I realized the reason for this quickly, when my eyes saw soldiers in barred cages, like men in a zoo. They had gone mad during the war; they were dirty, unshaven for more than a week and tormented. I shall never forget the shifting, pathetic eyes of one man with a dirty scrub of little stiff hairs around his chin, as he helplessly thought of whatever the war had caused him to consider himself.

We were taken off the *Agamemnon* in a tender at about six o'clock of a crisp February evening. The light in the tall buildings shone transparently through flat dark surfaces. We landed at a railroad yard in Jersey, and there was my father with a box of cigars and a shoebox full of chicken, and he was accompanied by a younger brother, who wore a derby hat. I was so bewildered by the strange sight of a derby hat, which I had not seen in almost two years, that I could scarcely greet them in the few minutes between landing from the tender and being shunted into dirty day coaches, with dusty red plush seats. I managed to open the box of cigars, and many of us puffed luxuriously for the hour of our dark journey to we knew not where.

Finally we got out of the train and marched into a camp filled with wooden barracks, which was more luxurious than anything we had yet encountered. It turned out to be Camp Merritt on the Palisades. After we had dropped our packs, we hurried to a hut, where we were officially deloused by means of warm shower baths and kerosene. Sleep that night was so pleasantly sensuous that I can almost remember it.

The next day we had grapefruit and cornflakes for breakfast, and we received passes to go into New York, where most of us had come from. The ride across the Fort Lee Ferry, which I had crossed so often in years before to take walks along the Palisades, gave me a sense of assurance and tranquillity, and the ride down Riverside Drive on a 'bus in the quiet of a winter afternoon was almost melancholy.

Every other day we received passes to go to New York. The day after I had been there for the first time in almost two years, I was wandering about Camp Merritt, wondering what to do with myself during the long afternoon, when a soldier came up to me. "Say, you want a pass to New York?" he asked, as he handed me one. "Sure," I said, holding the piece of paper in wonderment, "but aren't you going to use it?" "No," he answered, "I was there once on the way to France; I don't want to see it again."

SOLDIERS' PAY

FROM

"SOLDIERS' PAY" BY WILLIAM FAULKNER

Lowe, Julian, number ——, late a Flying Cadet, Umptieth Squadron, Air Service, known as "One Wing" by the other embryonic aces of his flight, regarded the world with a yellow and disgruntled eye. He suffered the same jaundice that many a more booted one than he did, from Flight Commander through Generals to the ambrosial single-barred (not to mention that inexplicable beast of the field which the French so beautifully call an aspiring aviator) ; they had stopped the war on him.

So he sat in a smoldering of disgusted sorrow, not even enjoying his Pullman prerogatives, spinning on his thumb his hat with its accursed white band.

"Had your nose in the wind, hey, buddy?" said Yaphank, going home and smelling to high heaven of bad whisky.

"Ah, go to hell," he returned sourly and Yaphank doffed his tortured hat.

"Why, sure, General—or should I of said Lootenant? Excuse me, madam. I got gassed doing k. p. and my sight ain't been the same since. On to Berlin! Yeh, sure, we're on to Berlin. I'm on to you, Berlin. I got your number. Number no thousand no hundred and naughty naught Private (very private) Joe Gilligan, late for parade, late for fatigue, late for breakfast when breakfast is late. The statue of liberty ain't never seen me, and if she do, she'll have to 'bout face."

Cadet Lowe raised a sophisticated eye. "Say, whatcher drinking, anyway?"

"Brother, I dunno. Fellow that makes it was gave a Con-

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gressional medal last Chuesday because he has got a plan to stop the war. Enlist all the Dutchmen in our army and make 'em drink so much of his stuff a day for forty days, see? Ruin any war. Get the idea?"

"I'll say. Won't know whether it's a war or a dance, huh?"

"Sure, they can tell. The women will all be dancing. Listen, I had a swell jane and she said, 'for Christ's sake, you can't dance.' And I said, 'like hell I can't.' And we was dancing and she said, 'what are you, anyways?' And I says, 'what do you wanta know for? I can dance as well as any general or major or even a sergeant, because I just win four hundred in a poker game,' and she said, 'oh, you did?' and I said, 'sure, stick with me, kid,' and she said, 'where is it?' Only I wouldn't show it to her and then this fellow come up to her and said, 'are you dancing this one?' And she said, 'sure, I am. This bird don't dance.' Well, he was a sergeant, the biggest one I ever seen. Say, he was like that fellow in Arkansaw that had some trouble with a nigger and a friend said to him, 'well, I hear you killed a nigger yesterday.' And he said, 'yes, weighed two hundred pounds.' Like a bear." He took the lurching of the train limberly and Cadet Lowe said, "For Christ's sake."

"Sure," agreed the other. "She won't hurt you, though. I done tried it. My dog won't drink none of it of course, but then he got bad ways hanging around Brigade H. Q. He's the one trophy of the war I got: something that wasn't never bawled out by a shave-tail for not saluting. Say, would you kindly like to take a little something to keep off the summiferous dews of this goddam country? The honor is all mine and you won't mind it much after the first two drinks. Makes me homesick: like a garage. Ever work in a garage?"

Sitting on the floor between two seats was Yaphank's' traveling companion, trying to ignite a splayed and sodden cigar. Like devastated France, thought Cadet Lowe, swimming his memory through the adenoidal reminiscences of Captain Bleyth, an R. A. F. pilot delegated to temporarily re-inforce their democracy.

"Why, poor soldier," said his friend, tearfully, "all alone in no man's land and no matches. Ain't war hell? I ask you." He tried to push the other over with his leg, then he fell to kicking him, slowly. "Move over, you ancient mariner. Move over, you goddam bastard. Alas, poor Jerks or something (I seen that in a play, see? Good line) come on, come on; here's General Pershing come to have a drink with the poor soldiers." He addressed Cadet Lowe. "Look at him: ain't he sodden in depravity?"

"Battle of Coonyak," the man on the floor muttered. "Ten men killed. Maybe fifteen. Maybe hundred. Poor children at home sayin 'Alice, where art thou?' "

"Yeh, Alice. Where in hell are you? That other bottle. What'n'ell have you done with it? Keeping it to swim in when you get home?"

The man on the floor weeping said: "You wrong me as ever man wronged. Accuse me of hiding mortgage on house? Then take this soul and body; take all. Ravish me, big boy."

"Ravish a bottle of vinegar juice out of you, anyway," the other muttered, busy beneath the seat. He rose triumphant, clutching a fresh bottle. "Hark! the sound of battle and the laughing horses draws near. But shall they dull this poor unworthy head? No! But I would like to of seen one of them laughing horses. Must of been lady horses all together. Your extreme highness"—with ceremony, extending the bottle—"will you be kind enough to kindly condescend to honor these kind but unworthy strangers in a foreign land?"

Cadet Lowe accepted the bottle, drank briefly, gagged and spat his drink. The other supporting him massaged his back. "Come on, come on, they don't nothing taste that bad." Kindly cupping Lowe's opposite shoulder in his palm he forced the bottle mouthward again. Lowe released the bottle, defending himself. "Try again. I got you. Drink it, now."

"Jesus Christ," said Cadet Lowe, averting his head.

Passengers were interested and Yaphank soothed him. "Now, now. They won't nothing hurt you. You are among

friends. Us soldiers got to stick together in a foreign country like this. Come on, drink her down. She ain't worth nothing to no one, spit on his legs like that."

"Hell, man, I can't drink it."

"Why, sure you can. Listen: think of flowers. Think of your poor gray-haired mother hanging on the front gate and sobbing her gray-haired heart out. Listen, think of having to go to work again when you get home. Ain't war hell? I would of been a corporal at least, if she had just hung on another year."

"Hell, I can't."

"Why, you got to," his new friend told him kindly, pushing the bottle suddenly in his mouth and tilting it. To be flooded or to swallow were his choices so he drank and retained it. His belly rose and hung, then sank reluctant.

"There now, wasn't so bad, was it? Remember, this hurts me to see my good licker going more than it does you. But she do kind of smack of gasoline, don't she?"

Cadet Lowe's outraged stomach heaved at its muscular moorings like a captive balloon. He gaped and his vitals coiled coldly in a passionate ecstasy. His friend again thrust the bottle in his mouth.

"Drink, quick! You got to protect your investment, you know."

His private parts, flooded, washed back to his gulping and a sweet fire ran through him, and the Pullman conductor came and regarded them in helpless disgust.

"Ten-shun," said Yaphank, springing to his feet. "Beware of officers! Rise, men, and salute the admiral here." He took the conductor's hand and held it. "Boys, this man commanded the navy," he said. "When the enemy tried to capture Coney Island he was there. Or somewhere between there and Chicago, anyway, wasn't you, Colonel?"

"Look out, man, don't do that." But Yaphank had already kissed his hand.

"Now, run along, Sergeant. And don't come back until dinner is ready."

"Listen, you must stop this. You will ruin my train."

"Bless your heart, Captain, your train couldn't be no safer with us if it was your own daughter." The man sitting on the floor moved and Yaphank cursed him. "Sit still, can't you? Say, this fellow thinks it's night. Suppose you have your hired man bed him down? He's just in the way here."

The conductor, deciding Lowe was the sober one, addressed him.

"For God's sake, soldier, can't you do something with them?"

"Sure," said Cadet Lowe. "You run along; I'll look after them. They're all right."

"Well, do something with them. I can't bring a train into Chicago with the whole army drunk on it. My God, Sherman was sure right."

Yaphank stared at him quietly. Then he turned to his companions. "Men," he said solemnly, "he don't want us here. And this is the reward we get for giving our flesh and blood to our country's need. Yes, sir, he don't want us here; he begrudges us riding on his train, even. Say, suppose we hadn't sprang to the nation's call, do you know what kind of a train you'd have? A train full of Germans. A train full of folks eating sausage and drinking beer, all going to Milwaukee, that's what you'd have."

"Couldn't be worse than a train full of you fellows not knowing where you're going," the conductor replied.

"All right," Yaphank answered. "If that's the way you feel, we'll get off your goddam train. Do you think this is the only train in the world?"

"No, no," the conductor said hastily, "not at all. I don't want you to get off. I just want you to straighten up and not disturb the other passengers."

The sitting man lurched clumsily and Cadet Lowe met interested stares.

"No," said Yaphank, "no! You have refused the hospitality of your train to the saviors of your country. We could have expected better treatment than this in Germany, even in Texas." He turned to Lowe. "Men, we will get off his train at the next station. Hey, General?"

"My God," repeated the conductor. "If we ever have another peace I don't know what the railroads will do. I thought war was bad, but my God."

"Run along," Yaphank told him, "run along. You probably won't stop for us, so I guess we'll have to jump off. Gratitude! Where is gratitude, when trains won't stop to let poor soldiers off? I know what it means. They'll fill trains with poor soldiers and run 'em off into the Pacific Ocean. Won't have to feed 'em any more. Poor soldiers! Woodrow, you wouldn't of treated me like this."

"Hey, what you doing?" But the man ignored him, tugging the window up and dragging a cheap paper suit-case across his companion's knees. Before either Lowe or the conductor could raise a hand he had pushed the suit-case out the window. "All out, men!"

His sodden companion heaved clawing from the floor. "Hey! That was mine you throwed out!"

"Well, ain't you going to get off with us? We are going to throw 'em all off, and when she slows down we'll jump ourselves."

"But you throwed mine off first," the other said.

"Why, sure. I was saving you the trouble, see? Now don't you feel bad about it; you can throw mine off if you want, and then Pershing here, and the admiral can throw each other's off the same way. You got a bag, ain't you?" he asked the conductor. "Get yours, quick, so we won't have so damn far to walk."

"Listen, soldiers," said the conductor, and Cadet Lowe, thinking of Elba, thinking of his coiling guts and a slow alcoholic fire in him, remarked the splayed official gold breaking

the man's cap. New York swam flatly past; Buffalo was imminent, and sunset.

"Listen, soldiers," repeated the conductor. "I got a son in France. Sixth Marines he is. His mother ain't heard from him since October. I'll do anything for you boys, see, but for God's sake act decent."

"No," replied the man, "you have refused us hospitality, so we get off. When does the train stop? or have we got to jump?"

"No, no, you boys sit here. Sit here and behave and you'll be all right. No need to get off."

He moved swaying down the aisle and the sodden one removed his devastated cigar. "You threw my suit-case out," he repeated.

Yaphank took Cadet Lowe's arm. "Listen. Wouldn't that discourage you? God knows, I'm trying to help the fellow get a start in life, and what do I get? One complaint after another." He addressed his friend again. "Why, sure, I threw your suit-case off. Whatcher wanta do? wait till we get to Buffalo and pay a quarter to have it took off for you?"

"But you threw my suit-case out," said the other again.

"All right. I did. Whatcher going to do about it?"

The other pawed himself erect, clinging to the window, and fell heavily over Lowe's feet. "For Christ's sake," his companion said, thrusting him into his seat, "watch whatcher doing."

"Get off," the man mumbled wetly.

"Huh?"

"Get off, too," he explained, trying to rise again. He got on to his legs and lurching, bumping and sliding about the open window he thrust his head through it. Cadet Lowe caught him by the brief skirt of his blouse.

"Here, here, come back, you damn fool. You can't do that."

"Why, sure he can," contradicted Yaphank, "let him jump off if he wants. He ain't only going to Buffalo, anyways."

"Hell, he'll kill himself."

"My God," repeated the conductor, returning at a heavy gallop. He leaned across Lowe's shoulder and caught the man's leg. The man, with his head and torso through the window, swayed lax and sodden as a meal sack. Yaphank pushed Lowe aside and tried to break the conductor's grip on the other's leg.

"Let him be. I don't believe he'll jump."

"But, good God, I can't take any chances. Look out, look out soldier! Pull him back there!"

"Oh, for Christ's sake, let him go," said Lowe, giving up.

"Sure," the other amended, "let him jump. I'd kind of like to see him do it, since he suggested it himself. Besides, he ain't the kind for young fellows like us to associate with. Good riddance. Let's help him off," he added, shoving at the man's lumpy body. The would-be suicide's hat whipped from his head and the wind temporarily clearing his brain, he fought to draw himself in. He had changed his mind. His companion resisted, kindly.

"Come on, come on. Don't lose your nerve now. G'wan and jump."

"Help!" the man shrieked into the vain wind and "help!" the conductor chorused, clinging to him, and two alarmed passengers and the porter came to his assistance. They overcame Yaphank and drew the now thoroughly alarmed man into the car. The conductor slammed shut the window.

"Gentlemen," he addressed the two passengers, "will you sit here and keep them from putting him out that window? I am going to put them all off as soon as we reach Buffalo. I'd stop the train and do it now, only they'd kill him as soon as they get him alone. Henry," to the porter, "call the train conductor and tell him to wire ahead to Buffalo we got two crazy men on board."

"Yeh, Henry," Yaphank amended to the negro, "tell 'em to have a band there and three bottles of whisky. If they ain't got a band of their own, tell 'em to hire one. I will pay for it." He dragged a blobby mass of bills from his pocket and strip-

ping off one, gave it to the porter. "Do you want a band too?" he asked Lowe. "No," answering himself, "no, you don't need none. You can use mine. Run now," he repeated.

"Yas suh, Cap'm." White teeth were like a suddenly opened piano.

"Watch 'em, men," the conductor told his appointed guards. "You, Henry!" he shouted, following the vanishing white jacket.

Yaphank's companion, sweating and pale, was about to become ill; Yaphank and Lowe sat easily respectively affable and belligerent. The newcomers touched shoulders for mutual support, alarmed but determined. Craned heads of other passengers became again smugly unconcerned over books and papers and the train rushed on along the sunset.

"Well, gentlemen," began Yaphank conversationally.

The two civilians sprang like plucked wires and one of them said, "Now, now," soothingly, putting his hands on the soldier. "Just be quiet, soldier, and we'll look after you. Us Americans appreciates what you've done."

"Hank White," muttered the sodden one.

"Huh?" asked his companion.

"Hank White," he repeated.

The other turned to the civilian cordially. "Well, bless my soul, if here ain't old Hank White in the flesh, that I was raised with! Why, Hank, we heard you was dead, or in the piano business or something. You ain't been fired, have you? I noticed you ain't got no piano with you."

"No, no," the man answered in alarm, "you are mistaken. Schluss is my name. I got a swell line of ladies' underthings." He produced a card.

"Well, well, ain't that nice. Say," he leaned confidentially toward the other, "you don't carry no women samples with you? No? I was afraid not. But never mind. I will get you one in Buffalo. Not buy you one, of course; just rent you one, you might say, for the time being. Horace," to Cadet Lowe, "where's that bottle?"

"Here she is, Major," responded Lowe, taking the bottle from beneath his blouse. Yaphank offered it to the two civilians.

"Think of something far, far away, and drink fast," he advised.

"Why, thanks," said the one called Schluss, tendering the bottle formally to his companion. They stooped cautiously and drank. Yaphank and Cadet Lowe drank, not stooping.

"Be careful, soldiers," warned Schluss.

"Sure," said Cadet Lowe. They drank again.

"Won't the other one take nothing?" asked the heretofore silent one, indicating Yaphank's traveling companion. He was hunched awkwardly in the corner. His friend shook him and he slipped limply to the floor.

"That's the horror of the demon rum, boys," said Yaphank solemnly and he took another drink. And Cadet Lowe took another drink. He tendered the bottle.

"No, no," Schluss said with passion, "not no more right now."

"He don't mean that," Yaphank said, "he just ain't thought." He and Lowe stared at the two civilians. "Give him time: he'll come to hisself."

After a while the one called Schluss took the bottle.

"That's right," Yaphank told Lowe confidentially. "For a while I thought he was going to insult the uniform. But you wasn't, was you?"

"No, No. They ain't no one respects the uniform like I do. Listen, I would of like to fought by your side, see? But someone got to look out for business while the boys are gone. Ain't that right?" he appealed to Lowe.

"I don't know," said Lowe with courteous belligerence, "I never had time to work any."

"Come on, come on," Yaphank reprimanded him, "all of us wasn't young enough to be lucky as you."

"How was I lucky?" Lowe rejoined fiercely.

"Well, shut up about it, if you wasn't lucky. We got something else to worry about."

"Sure," Schluss added quickly, "we all got something to worry about." He tasted the bottle briefly and the other said:

"Come on, now, drink it."

"No, no, thanks, I got a plenty."

Yaphank's eye was like a snake's. "Take a drink, now. Do you want me to call the conductor and tell him you are worrying us to give you whisky?"

The man gave him the bottle quickly. He turned to the other civilian. "What makes him act so funny?"

"No, no," said Schluss. "Listen, you soldiers drink if you want: we'll look after you."

The silent one added like a brother and Yaphank said:

"They think we are trying to poison them. They think we are German spies, I guess."

"No, no! When I see a uniform, I respect it like it was my mother."

"Then, come on and drink."

Schluss gulped and passed the bottle. His companion drank also and sweat beaded them.

"Won't he take nothing?" repeated the silent one and Yaphank regarded the other soldier with compassion.

"Alas, poor Hank," he said, "poor boy's done for, I fear. The end of a long friendship, men." Cadet Lowe said sure, seeing two distinct Hanks, and the other continued. "Look at that kind, manly face. Children together we was, picking flowers in the flowery meadows; him and me made the middle-weight mule-wiper's battalion what she was; him and me devastated France together. And now look at him."

"Hank! Don't you recognize this weeping voice, this soft hand on your brow? General," he turned to Lowe, "will you be kind enough to take charge of the remains? I will depute these kind strangers to stop at the first harness factory we pass and have a collar suitable for mules made of dogwood with the initials H. W. in forget-me-nots."

Schluss in ready tears tried to put his arm about Yaphank's shoulders. "There, there, death ain't only a parting. Brace up: take a little drink, then you'll feel better."

"Why, I believe I will," he replied; "you got a kind heart, buddy. Fall in when fire call blows, boys."

Schluss mopped his face with a soiled, scented handkerchief and they drank again. New York in a rosy glow of alcohol and sunset streamed past breaking into Buffalo, and with fervent new fire in them they remarked the station. Poor Hank now slept peacefully in a spittoon.

Cadet Lowe and his friend being cold of stomach, rose and supported their companions. Schluss evinced a disinclination to get off. He said it couldn't possibly be Buffalo, that he had been to Buffalo too many times. Sure, they told him, holding him erect, and the conductor glared at them briefly and vanished. Lowe and Yaphank got their hats and helped the civilians into the aisle.

"I'm certainly glad my boy wasn't old enough to be a soldier," remarked a woman passing them with difficulty, and Lowe said to Yaphank:

"Say, what about him?"

"Him?" repeated the other, having attached Schluss to himself.

"That one back there," Lowe indicated the casual.

"Oh, him? You are welcome to him, if you want him."

"Why, aren't you together?"

Outside was the noise and smoke of the station. They saw through the windows hurrying people and porters, and Yaphank moving down the aisle answered:

"Hell, no. I never seen him before. Let the porter sweep him out or keep him, whichever he likes."

They half dragged, half carried the two civilians and with diabolical cunning Yaphank led the way through the train and dismounted from a day coach. On the platform Schluss put his arm around the soldier's neck.

"Listen, fellows," he said with passion, "y' know m' name,

y' got addressh. Listen, I will show you 'Merica preshates what you done. Ol' Glory ever wave on land and sea. Listen, ain't nothing I got soldier can't have, nothing. N'if you wasn't soldiers I am still for you, one hundred pershent. I like you. I swear I like you."

"Why, sure," the other agreed, supporting him. After a while he spied a policeman and he directed his companion's gait toward the officer. Lowe with his silent one followed. "Stand up, can't you?" he hissed, but the man's eyes were filled with an inarticulate sadness, like a dog's. "Do the best you can, then," Cadet Lowe softened, added, and Yaphank, stopping before the policeman, was saying:

"Looking for two drunks, Sergeant? These men were annoying a whole trainload of people. Can't nothing be done to protect soldiers from annoyance? If it ain't top sergeants, it's drunks."

"I'd like to see the man can annoy a soldier," answered the officer. "Beat it, now."

"But say, these men are dangerous. What are you good for, if you can't preserve the peace?"

"Beat it, I said. Do you want me to run all of you in?"

"You are making a mistake, Sergeant. These are the ones you are looking for."

The policeman said, "Looking for?" regarding him with interest.

"Sure. Didn't you get our wire? We wired ahead to have the train met."

"Oh, these are the crazy ones, are they? Where's the one they were trying to murder?"

"Sure, they are crazy. Do you think a sane man would get hisself into this state?"

The policeman looked at the four of them with a blasé eye. "G'wan, now. You're all drunk. Beat it, or I'll run you in."

"All right. Take us in. If we got to go to the station to get rid of these crazy ones, we'll have to."

"Where's the conductor of this train?"

"He's with a doctor, working on the wounded one."

"Say, you men better be careful. Whatcher trying to do—kid me?"

Yaphank jerked his companion up. "Stand up," he said, shaking the man. "Love you like a brother," the other muttered. "Look at him," he said, "look at both of 'em. And there's a man hurt on that train. Are you going to stand here and do nothing?"

"I thought you was kidding me. These are the ones, are they?" he raised his whistle and another policeman ran up. "Here they are, Ed. You watch 'em and I'll get aboard and see about that dead man. You soldiers stay here, see?"

"Sure, Sergeant," Yaphank agreed. The officer ran heavily away and he turned to the civilians. "All right, boys. Here's the bell-hops come to carry you out where the parade starts. You go with them and me and this other officer will go back and get the conductor and the porter. They want to come, too."

Schluss again took him in his arms.

"Love you like a brother. Anything got's yours. Ask me."

"Sure," he rejoined. "Watch 'em, Cap, they're crazy as hell. Now, you run along with this nice man."

"Here," the policeman said, "you two wait here."

There came a shout from the train and the conductor's face was a bursting bellowing moon. "Like to wait and see it explode on him," Yaphank murmured. The policeman supporting the two men hurried toward the train. "Come on here," he shouted to Yaphank and Lowe.

As he drew away Yaphank spoke swiftly to Lowe.

"Come on, General," he said, "let's get going. So long, boys, Let's go, kid."

The policeman shouted, "Stop, there!" but they disregarded him, hurrying down the long shed, leaving the excitement to clot about itself, for all of them.

Outside the station in the twilight the city broke sharply its skyline against the winter evening and lights were shimmer-

ing birds on motionless golden wings, bell notes in arrested flight; ugly everywhere beneath a rumored retreating magic of color.

Food for the belly, and winter, though spring was somewhere in the world, from the south blown up like forgotten music. Caught both in the magic of change they stood feeling the spring in the cold air, as if they had but recently come into a new world, feeling their littleness and believing too that lying in wait for them was something new and strange. They were ashamed of this and silence was unbearable.

"Well, buddy," and Yaphank slapped Cadet Lowe smartly on the back, "that's one parade we'll sure be A.W.O.L. from, huh?"

THE FLY

FROM

"THE DOVE'S NEST AND OTHER STORIES" BY KATHERINE
MANSFIELD

"Y'are very snug in here," piped old Mr. Woodifield, and he peered out of the great, green leather armchair by his friend the boss's desk as a baby peers out of its pram. His talk was over; it was time for him to be off. But he did not want to go. Since he had retired, since his . . . stroke, the wife and the girls kept him boxed up in the house every day of the week except Tuesday. On Tuesday he was dressed up and brushed and allowed to cut back to the City for the day. Though what he did there the wife and girls couldn't imagine. Made a nuisance of himself to his friends, they supposed. . . . Well, perhaps so. All the same, we cling to our last pleasures as the tree clings to its last leaves. So there sat old Woodifield, smoking a cigar and staring almost greedily at the boss, who rolled in his office chair, stout, rosy, five years older than he, and still going strong, still at the helm. It did one good to see him.

Wistfully, admiringly, the old voice added, "It's snug in here, upon my word!"

"Yes, it's comfortable enough," agreed the boss, and he flipped the *Financial Times* with a paper-knife. As a matter of fact he was proud of his room; he liked to have it admired, especially by old Woodifield. It gave him a feeling of deep, solid satisfaction to be planted there in the midst of it in full view of that frail old figure in the muffler.

"I've had it done up lately," he explained, as he had explained for the past—how many?—weeks. "New carpet," and he pointed to the bright red carpet with a pattern of large white rings. "New furniture," and he nodded towards the mas-

sive bookcase and the table with legs like twisted treacle. "Electric heating!" He waved almost exultantly towards the five transparent, pearly sausages glowing so softly in the tilted copper pan.

But he did not draw old Woodifield's attention to the photograph over the table of a grave-looking boy in uniform standing in one of those spectral photographers' parks with photographers' storm-clouds behind him. It was not new. It had been there for over six years.

"There was something I wanted to tell you," said old Woodifield, and his eyes grew dim remembering. "Now what was it? I had it in my mind when I started out this morning." His hands began to tremble, and patches of red showed above his beard.

Poor old chap, he's on his last pins, thought the boss. And, feeling kindly, he winked at the old man, and said jokingly, "I tell you what. I've got a little drop of something here that'll do you good before you go out into the cold again. It's beautiful stuff. It wouldn't hurt a child." He took a key off his watch-chain, unlocked a cupboard below his desk, and drew forth a dark, squat bottle. "That's the medicine," said he. "And the man from whom I got it told me on the strict Q.T. it came from the cellars at Windsor Cassel."

Old Woodifield's mouth fell open at the sight. He couldn't have looked more surprised if the boss had produced a rabbit.

"It's whiskey, ain't it?" he piped, feebly.

The boss turned the bottle and lovingly showed him the label. Whiskey it was.

"D'you know," said he, peering up at the boss wonderingly, "they won't let me touch it at home." And he looked as though he was going to cry.

"Ah, that's where we know a bit more than the ladies," cried the boss, swooping across for two tumblers that stood on the table with the water-bottle, and pouring a generous finger into each. "Drink it down. It'll do you good. And don't put any water with it. It's sacrilege to tamper with stuff like this.

Ah!" He tossed off his, pulled out his handkerchief, hastily wiped his moustaches, and cocked an eye at old Woodifield, who was rolling his in his chops.

The old man swallowed, was silent a moment, and then said faintly, "It's nutty!"

But it warmed him; it crept into his chill old brain—he remembered.

"That was it," he said, heaving himself out of his chair. "I thought you'd like to know. The girls were in Belgium last week having a look at poor Reggie's grave, and they happened to come across your boy's. They're quite near each other, it seems."

Old Woodifield paused, but the boss made no reply. Only a quiver in his eyelids showed that he heard.

"The girls were delighted with the way the place is kept," piped the old voice. "Beautifully looked after. Couldn't be better if they were at home. You've not been across, have yer?"

"No, no!" For various reasons the boss had not been across.

"There's miles of it," quavered old Woodifield, "and it's all as neat as a garden. Flowers growing on all the graves. Nice broad paths." It was plain from his voice how much he liked a nice broad path.

The pause came again. Then the old man brightened wonderfully.

"D'you know what the hotel made the girls pay for a pot of jam?" he piped. "Ten francs! Robbery, I call it. It was a little pot, so Gertrude says, no bigger than a half-crown. And she hadn't taken more than a spoonful when they charged her ten francs. Gertrude brought the pot away with her to teach 'em a lesson. Quite right, too; it's trading on our feelings. They think because we're over there having a look around we're ready to pay anything. That's what it is." And he turned towards the door.

"Quite right, quite right!" cried the boss, though what was quite right he hadn't the least idea. He came round by his desk,

followed the shuffling footsteps to the door, and saw the old fellow out. Woodifield was gone.

For a long moment the boss stayed, staring at nothing, while the grey-haired office messenger, watching him, dodged in and out of his cubbyhole like a dog that expects to be taken for a run. Then: "I'll see nobody for half an hour, Macey," said the boss. "Understand? Nobody at all."

"Very good, sir."

The door shut, the firm heavy steps recrossed the bright carpet, the fat body plumped down in the spring chair, and leaning forward, the boss covered his face with his hands. He wanted, he intended, he had arranged to weep. . . .

It had been a terrible shock to him when old Woodifield sprang that remark upon him about the boy's grave. It was exactly as though the earth had opened and he had seen the boy lying there with Woodifield's girls staring down at him. For it was strange. Although over six years had passed away, the boss never thought of the boy except as lying unchanged, unblemished in his uniform, asleep for ever. "My son!" groaned the boss. But no tears came yet. In the past, in the first months and even years after the boy's death, he had only to say those words to be overcome by such grief that nothing short of a violent fit of weeping could relieve him. Time, he had declared then, he had told everybody, could make no difference. Other men perhaps might recover, might live their loss down, but not he. How was it possible? His boy was an only son. Ever since his birth the boss had worked at building up this business for him; it had no other meaning if it was not for the boy. Life itself had come to have no other meaning. How on earth could he have slaved, denied himself, kept going all those years without the promise for ever before him of the boy's stepping into his shoes and carrying on where he left off?

And that promise had been so near being fulfilled. The boy had been in the office learning the ropes for a year before the

war. Every morning they had started off together; they had come back by the same train. And what congratulations he had received as the boy's father! No wonder; he had taken to it marvellously. As to his popularity with the staff, every man jack of them down to old Macey couldn't make enough of the boy. And he wasn't in the least spoilt. No, he was just his bright, natural self, with the right word for everybody, with that boyish look and his habit of saying, "Simply splendid!"

But all that was over and done with as though it never had been. The day had come when Macey had handed him the telegram that brought the whole place crashing about his head. "Deeply regret to inform you . . ." And he had left the office a broken man, with his life in ruins.

Six years ago, six years. . . . How quickly time passed! It might have happened yesterday. The boss took his hands from his face; he was puzzled. Something seemed to be wrong with him. He wasn't feeling as he wanted to feel. He decided to get up and have a look at the boy's photograph. But it wasn't a favorite photograph of his; the expression was unnatural. It was cold, even stern-looking. The boy had never looked like that.

At that moment the boss noticed that a fly had fallen into his broad inkpot, and was trying feebly but desperately to clamber out again. Help! help! said those struggling legs. But the sides of the inkpot were wet and slippery; it fell back again and began to swim. The boss took up a pen, picked the fly out of the ink, and shook it on to a piece of blotting-paper. For a fraction of a second it lay still on the dark patch that oozed round it. Then the front legs waved, took hold, and, pulling its small sodden body up it began the immense task of cleaning the ink from its wings. Over and under, over and under, went a leg along a wing, as the stone goes over and under the scythe. Then there was a pause, while the fly, seeming to stand on the tips of its toes, tried to expand first one wing and then the other. It succeeded at last, and, sitting down, it began, like a

minute cat, to clean its face. Now one could imagine that the little front legs rubbed against each other lightly, joyfully. The horrible danger was over; it had escaped; it was ready for life again.

But just then the boss had an idea. He plunged his pen back into the ink, leaned his thick wrist on the blotting-paper, and as the fly tried its wings down came a great heavy blot. What would it make of that? What indeed! The little beggar seemed absolutely cowed, stunned, and afraid to move because of what would happen next. But then, as if painfully, it dragged itself forward. The front legs waved, caught hold, and, more slowly this time, the task began from the beginning.

He's a plucky little devil, thought the boss, and he felt a real admiration for the fly's courage. That was the way to tackle things; that was the right spirit. Never say die; it was only a question of . . . But the fly had again finished its laborious task, and the boss had just time to refill his pen, to shake fair and square on the new-cleaned body yet another dark drop. What about it this time? A painful moment of suspense followed. But behold, the front legs were again waving; the boss felt a rush of relief. He leaned over the fly and said to it tenderly, "You artful little b——" And he actually had the brilliant notion of breathing on it to help the drying process. All the same, there was something timid and weak about its efforts now, and the boss decided that this time should be the last, as he dipped the pen into the inkpot.

It was. The last blot on the soaked blotting-paper, and the draggled fly lay in it and did not stir. The back legs were stuck to the body; the front legs were not to be seen.

"Come on," said the boss. "Look sharp!" And he stirred it with his pen—in vain. Nothing happened or was likely to happen. The fly was dead.

The boss lifted the corpse on the end of the paper-knife and flung it into the waste-paper basket. But such a grinding feeling of wretchedness seized him that he felt positively frightened. He started forward and pressed the bell for Macey.

"Bring me some fresh blotting-paper," he said, sternly, "and look sharp about it." And while the old dog paddled away he fell to wondering what it was he had been thinking about before. What was it? It was . . . He took out his handkerchief and passed it inside his collar. For the life of him he could not remember.

THE RETURN OF A HERO

FROM

"PLUMES" BY LAURENCE STALLINGS

The city of Washington at the beginning of December, 1920, presented some difficulties to the seeker after employment, and Richard Plume was looking for a job. Administration heads had eventually begun reduction of war-time payrolls, for the past months had brought a Presidential election, when economy was the challenging cry. Thus none but the politically faithful were retained; there was no nonsense about merit, for one man was as good as another in a Republic dedicated to that proposition. Even among the faithful there was an occasional yelp of pain and a slinking tail, as some dog was kicked by the master accustomed to feed him. Sons and Daughters of Provincial Politicians—there was almost a society of them—were clinging tooth and nail to vanishing bureaus and portfolios, for they knew their patrons had been swept away in the rising tide of resentment against the palsied old man in the White House. Winning politicians, promising to enter the League of Nations, and also to open the treasury doors to the yapping heroes, descended upon Washington with identical hordes to supplant the vanishing ones with Mosaic reparation. The Democratic South was in agony, for her sons, in eight years of office holding, had sung even as the grasshopper in the fable in the midst of transient milk and honey. The Republican North was parched a corresponding number of years and after a quarter of a century, too, of great opportunities for the lush fruits of bureaucracy. Some who were assured soft berths when America swung from idealism came to enjoy an extra year of leisure. What made it harder upon Richard's chances

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of employment was that these hordes also came early to secure light but remunerative work for blood-kin and politically tractable.

More pathetic than any of these were the war workers scattered through the four quarters of the wide, quiet city. Hordes peered over the economic abyss and beheld their doom. Gradually the maisonettes and apartments of the city were vacated by half, while the other half doubled individual capacities, as discharged clung to employed while politicians were importuned. For the first time, a puritan American city embraced the conventions of Montparnasse, and bourgeois lovers roomed in quartets. Men fought hardily before being driven from Eden to the outer darkness of provincial towns where bacchanals could be held only in disreputable shacks along the railroad tracks. Girl-clerks, having relinquished joyously a virginal condition which counted nothing in a single economic standard of the war years, were terrified at the prospect of a return to mid-western double-standard morality with its inquisitory elders. It had been a great war for these folks, a bursting of limited horizons, and they had not reckoned on this untimely end. A few of the girls sat upon the benches of the wide parks and swallowed bichloride. A few of the men killed themselves, but most of them returned to their dismal homes bravely, patiently to await there resumption of hostilities with any foreign nation whatsoever.

Richard knew that being a returned soldier militated against him in this swarm of job-seekers, and rightly. Eighteen months past, when Esme sank to her knees at his bedside, had he been physically competent to walk into a situation while the nation gasped over the supreme sacrifice, he might have been able to live it down. Richard cherished no delusions now that the country, back in the solid self-interest of a normal life, had sized up its flurry into European affairs.

Soldiers were of many classes. There were those who had escaped with only slight disabilities or none, and a great many of them, caught up in a bestial convulsion of civilization in

their formative years, were unfit for industry at all. They would be ex-soldiers until death. The bulk of returned men, however, had returned to industrial pursuits where they said nothing about the war, fearing least they class themselves on the one hand among the permanent ex-soldiers, and on the other among those bores who prattle of war and continually embarrass their newly-rich acquaintances. Then there were the disabled ones, of which Richard was one, and God preserve the country from them. They sold leaflets and magazines, shouted their contempt for conservative citizens, gave up positions as quickly as philanthropists located them, snarled, fought, howled and hobbled through various beneficiary channels of the government, and occasionally returned to civil life and ceased to annoy politicians. Some even went into politics, for astute politicians were combing the crippled ranks for likely sons of elder statesmen, sensible of their vote-getting qualities. Still less occasionally, some disabled soldier was rehabilitated by his government and thrown back into the spawning pool of life. Washington swarmed with them.

* * * * *

Richard knew why Esme had opposed his looking for work, and knew that she would be happier when he found something. He walked so badly, and she feared that rebuffs would hurt him too deeply. But he knew of two prospects. The analytical chemist at Walter Reed Hospital had given him two hopes. The first was the better paid, but the second the better hope. The Green Crescent Drug Stores, Inc., maintaining a chain of stores about the Capital, needed a laboratory man for work in serums, and the hospital chemist said they'd pay \$45 a week. There was also a vacancy in the Bureau of Animal Industry, he thought, in the Department of Agriculture, at \$1500 a year.

"I know of a third," he said, "but you wouldn't take it, Plume. It's really nothing but a boot-legging laboratory."

If the orthopedic brace had been finished earlier, he could

have practised walking. There was no time now. The government place would have to be secured at once, if at all. And a poor hope a man would have swinging a long, stiff leg between crutches when applying for a job among the test-tubes, refrigerators, and sterilizers of a bacteriological lab. He had to wear the brace and put up the best front he could. And he had to have a job, for he had been before the board in the hospital and his papers would be delivered in another two weeks. His body, save the shattered leg, was so strong that he hadn't received the disability rating he had hoped for. Still, \$45 a month was not to be scorned as a pension.

"It will almost support Dickie," he told Esme.

She knew more about finances.

"It will hardly pay his rent," she said. "If there were just you and I, we could live in one large room. Forty-five dollars would pay for it. But with Dickie, we must have two rooms, some sort of kitchen and a bath. The government should really have given you a cottage and an automobile."

* * * * *

When Richard set out to approach his prospects that first morning, the wind was rising rapidly and the light fall of snow, which had begun floating down at dawn, was now piling and swirling about the streets of Washington, taking refuge in drifts from the caprice of every gust in the city's circled and absurd streets. It had been a vista of white roofs and areaways that greeted an enraptured Esme that morning when she flung wide the windows to free the furnished room of smoke from a chafing dish. She had called to Richard in happy surprise, she who could find in the humors of nature a delight so instantly complete as to dull the passing of less memorable days.

"It's a good omen for the first attempt, Richard," she had called to him, as she leaned from the window. For her it seemed as though the heavens had hidden under a white cloak of charity the scars of life.

Richard sat side-wise on his bed. His long, gnarled leg was extended over the side of the mattress, and he was leaning doubled to reach the laces on a yellow orthopedic shoe, adjusting pads about the twisted ankle. He lifted the brace, set the heavy iron shafts along his mutilated thigh and regarded the effect with pleasure. This brace, he reflected, was the key to unlock the world denied him nearly three years. The orthopedic men at Walter Reed had said as much. Carefully and painfully he laced the hard leather cuff about the mottled depressions of his shattered knee. He squeezed gently the tiny fissure in a livid scar, and quickly mopped away with a fleck of cotton a thin film of serum.

He answered Esme's rapture, where she still leaned half over the window ledge, and he hastily hid the cotton from her sight. Not that she did not know of that tiny discharge. . . . But it hurt her. . . . She could turn white for fear the graft uniting his thigh bone with his shin was breaking down again. Richard snapped the cold iron shafts into their channels under the shoe heel complacently. This brace would carry a man to his work. He mentally resolved to use one stick instead of two when the weather lightened. He stood erect, listing to port, because of the ridiculous bow of the tortured leg. He shifted to test the adjustment of this magic carpet which was to bear the lame prince from the tower. When it was first adjusted the day before at the hospital, and he had taken his first step since Soissons, Esme had drawn the analogy of that magic carpet fairy tale.

"Abracadabra," she had cried. Richard had understood. Within her heart, Esme had been crushed by those first, staggering, bear-like steps. Long ago she had wept at Rahway because of the suffering. But now she knew the sorrow of that pioneer woman who wove the fish-trap of hickory wythes.

He remembered the orthopedic chief's directions, "It can't get away from you if you lace it properly, but for God's sake mind that new union in the femur and tibia. Lace it tightly. And no matter how you fall, you'll take the impact on that

chamois-covered ring. See, right in your groin. I'd extend those leather cuffs, particularly those on your thigh, but I'm afraid that scar tissue won't stand for it." Richard shifted about the room. His body lunged against the bathroom door. He winced from the sickening shock in his groin. The surgeon's last words struck him:

"God, Plume, but you've got a pretty thing there to show your grandchildren!" Dickie's children, eh? Thirty years from now in iron braces. . . .

They placed arms about one another and from the window surveyed the neighboring roofs.

"Marvelous!" said Esme, holding him closer. "If I had a sled I'd pull you down Sixteenth Street to the White House."

The man summoned his enthusiasms, those trumpery bursts of one who knows he can never again riot in sounds of wood and field. A year ago he would have answered by saying, "Isn't the snow lovely? I wish that I could . . ." But that way he was sure made them both wistful for their lost days of old roads and long cool meadows. He could say nothing.

Walking to the bus, the snow collected in mounds on Richard's misshapen foot. Esme stopped him twice on the block to clear it with her handkerchief. "Don't let your foot stay damp, Richard," she said. "And please come home when you are tired. We have four hundred dollars."

They were waiting for the bus. Esme thrust one glove forward and revealed a small, silver button which had lain next her palm.

"Richard, darling," she said, "just to oblige me."

The crippled man's face became wry. He looked into his wife's sparkling, wintry eyes, taking in the faded greatcoat, stout shoes, woolen gloves, odor of frying bacon in her fair hair. She hurt him, standing there, for her appearance was his handiwork. He would like to have thrown the button across the street, but she was opening his new overcoat and turning back his new scarf and reaching for the coat lapel. The bus was approaching. He kissed her fingers.

"Thank you for remembering it," he said.

"I'm so proud to-day," she whispered. She did not remain to watch him climb painfully upon the platform, because she was beginning to know that no man wishes to falter before the eyes of the woman he loves. Had he been passive enough, she would have found the strength to have lifted him in her arms, mounted the bus and thus carried him about the city. . . .

* * * * *

The bus was swollen beyond the bellows' capacity possessed on Saturday nights, for the snow had driven the morning pedestrians to cover. Richard, first time in a street conveyance in three years, got himself wedged between two girls in the narrow aisle of the camion. The chamois ring received the impact each time the wheels of the vehicle, lurching among the miniature flocs of the gutter, came to halt with a shriek from outraged brakebands. Richard felt guilty of infidelity when he stealthily reached under his scarf and removed the blatant silver wound button still warm from Esme's palm.

His two buffers were young, and they chatted under the right arm he raised to grip the long, "sanitary" enameled rod of the transport. Each time he lunged with the impact of the brakebands he struck the girl ahead. She, a darling and pretty child with the glow of cheap cosmetics caricaturing the glow of her youth, at each impact expressed in pantomime to her vis-à-vis her opinion of the fresh guy's manifestly exaggerated unsteadiness. Richard suspected that the outside shaft of his brace was touching the girl's thigh. He smiled, not so much into her face, as over his own reflection upon the expediency of removing his hat and informing the pretty child that the contact was a highly impersonal one, since an iron brace afforded him no erotic and tactile stimulus whatever. Unfortunately he had smiled directly into her face. The crimson grease curled.

"Lay off me, you big stiff!" said the pretty child. "Or I'll drive a hatpin through your head."

Richard was angry, and worst of all, he was embarrassed at the stares of the passengers who evidently regarded him as a satyr. He had absolutely no self-conscious embarrassment over his wound. He would have been indifferent to their stares at his scars had they been naked before them. He decided to inform the girl that he "was disabled by multiple wounds while performing an act of extraordinary etc., etc." if necessary, to clear his moral character. He would not say it, for he knew that the child would have been willing for him to have sat upon her the remainder of the journey. But he was spared the necessity of any explanation whatsoever. A rather gaseous and undersized fellow, in a green suit one sensed was belted at the back in spite of the overcoat of raglan mode thrown jauntily over it, solved the problem for him. He folded his paper on his seat.

"What do you mean?" he said, "trying to rub up an honest girl?"

Richard saw the small, silver button on the champion's lapel—one of the defendants of democracy. Richard was nonplused, but the blood of old Jabez Plume took the matter out of his hands.

"And what," he said, surprised at the Plume voice, and aware it was placing him in a position no more intelligent than that of the champion, "is that to you?"

The fellow was off with the query, now immensely reinforced by approving glares. He poised a moment as dogs do, about to rush a foe, when they stop and take the wind full on. "I'll ——"

"If you don't sit down," said Richard shortly, maddened by the intimate interest of all the passengers, "I'll damn well knock you for a row of G.I. cans."

The vernacular which came naturally as a handmaiden of a nationally cultivated brutality had given the secret away. The champion perceived that the caitiff knight was also a quondam savior of the nation. While this revelation aroused no feeling of camaraderie, it deprived the squire of dames of an im-

mense moral superiority. He submitted to a stroke of intelligence. He perceived the white face. He cast his eyes downward to where the right-hand cane was suspended by its crook from Richard's overcoat pocket. It was a yellow cane, such as those given away by the Red Cross. He made reparation and he made it loud enough to give every rider in the bus a patriotic tingling.

"What outfit, buddy?" he said, extending his hand warmly. He turned to the pretty one. "Quiet down, sister! Can't you see the guy's wounded?"

Papers were resumed throughout the bus after sympathetic stares and remarks were exhausted. An old international incident had been opened and closed. The new friend threaded a way to the door for Richard and pointed out through the swirling streets of slush to the sign of the Green Crescent Drug Stores, Inc.

* * * * *

He slowly tested each hummock of ice as he crossed the street and cautiously set the new brace only when certain that the ferules of his two canes were on firm purchase. The wind veered, a capful caught in the expanse of his overcoat and he fell once. He ruefully brushed the ice off. Save for the biology instructorship, he had never held a position in his life. But he had read a book entitled *Selling Yourself* once when a hospital mate in some forgotten ward had been following a correspondence course in salesmanship. The first rule was that a man about to sell himself must be neat, must imply bounding activity and radiant health; two, catch your subject's attention; three, gain his interest; four, instil the desire to possess; five, cultivate the desire until the buyer comes to terms. He knew that he could do the work easily enough if he got the job. He began to appreciate the devilish felicity of magazine advertisements wherein a man in jumpers clasped a beautiful wife to his breast and cried out in triumph: "I got the job!"

He entered the Green Crescent Drug Stores, Inc., and asked

for the general manager. "A bold front," something whispered, "is half the battle." The clerk pointed to a stair at the side. He clinked up it slowly, trying to appear unconcerned as the metal brace rang on the brass-bound steps.

"Please inform the manager," he told the outside girl, "that Mr. Plume is here and will see him." Something, his white drawn face . . . the yellowed sticks . . . the earnestness . . . the misshapen shoe . . . swayed the outside girl. "Working like a charm," he told himself. It was.

The manager sat at a desk with a green wave of glass cresting its dark body and fumbled with papers and a speaking tube. His short, black mustache barked sharp, rasping jargon into the imperishability of a wax cylinder. Richard noted whimsically that the manager paid him no attention. He also noted hopefully that he gained the hard straight chair, "designed to test the applicant's poise," without his disability having been observed. It was exactly according to the book. He braced himself for the sudden, whirling shot of the manager's swivel chair. The barking ceased. The executive whirled as though a grenade had exploded in the room:

"Well, Mr. Plume!" Just that.

"You need a man as a laboratory assistant, particularly for autogenous serums. If my qualifications will satisfy you, I'm sure my work will."

The general manager was tremendously attentive. It was evident that he had formed upon the book. "I never attend to problems of personnel in the laboratory divisions," he said. "But my chief there does need an assistant." He arose, impressed by the poise. "Suppose we walk back. . . ."

He had perceived the yellow canes and the key to the world. He hesitated.

"Suppose you drop back in about six months," the manager smiled kindly.

* * * * *

The snow was turning into warm, Fall rain, when he gained

the streets, and white beauty was vanishing before the reality of dark curbs and pavements awash with slush. A policeman gave him directions for reaching the Department of Agriculture. The chamois ring seemed to have slipped from his groin as his thigh shrunk under pressure of the tight-laced cuff. There was a dull pumping where the fissure in the knee scar had exuded serum that morning, and he felt the goose-flesh as his super-adrenalin glands protested. He caught a street car, resolving to take a taxi at the transfer point in answer to the protest, and spend a dollar of the five Esme had given him. She had given him the money as one might give money to a child. In eighteen months he had held no such sum.

There was a "rent car" sign on an automobile at the transfer point before the United States Treasury. He had opposed a cash bonus for veterans, in bickerings about the tiresome wards. "If I could walk into that building,"—he smiled to himself as he noted the collapse of a theory when faced by practical experience—"and draw six hundred dollars as a bonus just now, I would do it."

The knee joint was pumping hard and the yellow canes were blistering through the new gloves. The five dollars were in one green note. The officials of the bureau might ask him to call again in the next six months; so he boarded the next street car. The chamois ring seemed rimmed with fire. He raised it to the seat running the length of the car. The cuffs awoke forgotten wounds and the ankle pumped excitedly. His knee was jangling whole discords of pain. It had been foolish, this attempt, but he couldn't turn back now. A passenger boarded the car, sauntered along to where the iron shafts were resting upon the only vacant place on the seat. The passenger was a tall, iron-gray man in a broadcloth overcoat and yellow gloves. Quizzically and steadily he regarded the long leg on the seat. Richard took it down and permitted it to stretch into the aisle where the tom-toms of wrath beat a devil's tattoo. The passenger bowed, seated himself, and opened his paper.

Richard began checking up his defenses if he failed to get

the job. There was a Congressman Plume from Alabama, at least a third cousin. He felt a contempt for himself at the thought. The government would give him \$115 a month if he cared to enter the University of Chicago and remain three years for a doctorate. A wave of disgust for himself as he visualized a professional student living in a hovel with a wife and baby swept him. Then there was Esme's pleading that he return to Woodland and the instructorship. Well, that was the right thing to do for her. "I won't go back and lie about my wound and sit in the corner till I die," he said to himself. "I won't do it."

* * * * *

When he alighted from the car there was an ocean of grass and half-liquid snow before the hideous red buildings of the government. He fell repeatedly, and regarded the overcoat with furious disdain. He made no attempt to brush himself off. He cursed himself, he cursed the brace, he cursed the sergeons.

No one seemed to know where any one else was at the Bureau. The halls were wide, dark steppes. He wished they had small electric trams in these halls. Clerks going past looked at the brace. He colored. He promised himself that he wouldn't grow self-conscious about this misshapen foot, that would be a crowning folly. He saw his image in the glass of a door. He protruded in the rear as though he wore a bustle. He straightened his back for a few steps, but the chamois ring cried out against this sentimental pandering. He found the room at last.

The Chief of the Research Division sat in a white coat at a delicately appointed table in the midst of instruments, chemicals, devices, used in microscopy. Richard regarded this marvelously appointed place with the affection one might bestow upon the portrait of an old mistress. He recognized the old pungent air of a laboratory beyond the chief's door. The chief was bald, clean-shaven, steel-rimmed glasses over old,

gray eyes, and the ruddy color of a man who knows the goodness in green foods. The wounded man deliberately affixed the button in his overcoat lapel, marking the collapse of another theory. There was no salesmanship necessary. Richard asked for work, giddy from the chamois ring. He bowed:

"I want a lab. job."

"Have you passed civil service?" The old gray eyes regarded him kindly. The bald pate seemed benign as it glittered above the coat.

"No, but my army discharge gives me priority for an exam."

The chief pressed a button. A sallow, reed-like young man, with a face that might have worn a crown of thorns, limped from both ankles as he appeared from a laboratory room beyond. Richard caught a glimpse of the white walls and lit counters, nickeled sterilizers, glass plates, refrigerators, in that other room. He prayed that he might enter into its happiness. Richard was laying a certificate on the chief's desk. It was for a degree of Bachelor of Science in biology from a little freshwater college.

"Mr. Gary," the white coat said briskly. . . . He read the name on the sheepskin, and glanced toward the crown of thorns, "lend Mr. Plume an apron until he can secure his own. We'll carry him for an outside helper for a while."

The chief turned and scrutinized the white face:

"Take off your coat, son."

* * * * *

The chamois ring seemed fiendishly animate now, as if it had unlocked the gates of the world and was ready to rust a while. It protested with a crunching philosophy as Richard walked into the heavenly laboratory, bending the yellow canes as though they had been willow. The limping young man with the sad, bitter face seized a chair and shuffled it along the long, low table, littered with wire baskets of flasks plugged with cotton. Richard sat down as the reed-like body shuffled through

the door beyond. Mr. Gary limped back, dragging a small stool and beheld Richard holding shafts of iron high in air, the misshapen foot pointing to the ceiling. Richard noted the angular sides of Mr. Gary's coat. He diagnosed two stiff ankles and a broken back in a plaster cast.

"Here," said Mr. Gary, "rest your leg on this."

Richard thanked him faintly.

"When did you get that brace?" Mr. Gary might well have kicked him instead.

"Yesterday afternoon."

"First brace you've had?"

"Of this design. . . . Yes."

Richard flushed. Perhaps Mr. Gary was to explode with anger on being forced to accept a helper who was learning to walk. He resolved to lie about the brace if pressed further.

"I'm all right now," he said, thrusting his hand in his pocket to grip the chamois ring and thus take the shock upon his hand. He attempted to rise.

"Rats!" said the Crown of Thorns, waving him down again. "You haven't been out of bed a week. Pigmentation. Hands. Unscuffed toe on that shoe." Mr. Gary shuffled out of the room again and returned with a fresh apron.

"First roll down your trouser leg," he said, "and unlace that brace." Richard unfastened his trousers and his superior gently peeled the cloth from the iron. They unlaced the two cuffs, working gingerly over the eyelets. Slowly the chamois ring, mottled from a blood-raw thigh, was withdrawn. The biologist surveyed the wreck of his helper's leg. "Gunshot wounds," he said confidently. "Knee resection."

Richard nodded.

"Suppose you spend the day," said Mr. Gary, "reading these two bulletins ——" He extended two government pamphlets of light blue, "Acquaint you with our work. And you can fix up a 'scope at an instrument case after a while." He picked up the brace and started toward the cabinet again. "I'll tuck this away until closing time."

Richard quickly opened one of the blue pamphlets and screened his moist eyes, slowly massaging his knee with his free hand.

"Christ, but I'm glad you're to be the new man!" said Mr Gary. "Other fellow was patriotic. Got on my nerves."

RETROSPECT

FROM

"DISENCHANTMENT" BY C. E. MONTAGUE

The higher the wall or the horse from which you have tumbled, the larger, under Nature's iron law, are your bruises and consequent crossness likely to be. Before we try shaking or cuffing the disenraptured young Solomons in our magazines and our pits it would be humane to reflect that some five millions of these, in their turns, have fallen off an extremely high horse. Of course, we have all fallen off something since 1914. Even owners of ships and vendors of heavy woollens might, if all hearts were laid bare, be found to have fallen, not perhaps off a high horse, but at least off some minute metaphysical pony. Still, the record in length of vertical fall, and of proportionate severity of incidence upon an inelastic earth, is probably held by ex-soldiers and, among these, by the volunteers of the first year of the war. We were all, of course, volunteers then, undiluted by indispensable Harry's later success in getting dispensable Johnnie forced to join us in the Low Countries.

Most of those volunteers of the prime were men of handsome and boundless illusions. Each of them quite seriously thought of himself as a molecule in the body of a nation that was really, and not just figuratively, "straining every nerve" to discharge an obligation of honour. Honestly, there was about them as little as there could humanly be of the coxcombry of self-devotion. They only felt that they had got themselves happily placed on a rope at which everyone else, in some way or other, was tugging his best as well as they. All the air was ringing with rousing assurances. France to be saved, Belgium righted, freedom and civilization re-won, a sour,

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soiled, crooked old world to be rid of bullies and crooks and reclaimed for straightness, decency, good-nature, the ways of common men dealing with common men. What a chance! The plain recruit who had not the gift of a style said to himself that for once he had got right in on the ground-floor of a topping good thing, and he blessed the luck that had made him neither too old nor too young. Rupert Brooke, meaning exactly the same thing, was writing:

Now, God be thank'd who has match'd us with His hour,
And caught our youth and waken'd us from sleeping,
With hand made sure, clear eye, and sharpen'd power,
To turn, as swimmers into cleanness leaping,
Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary. . . .

Of course, it is easy to say to any such simpleton now: "Well, if you were like that, what could you expect? *Vous l'avez voulu, George Dandin*. You were rushing upon disillusionment." Of course he was. If each recruit in 1914 had been an à Kempis, or even a Rochefoucauld, he would have known that if you are to love mankind you must not expect too much from it. But he was not, as a rule, a philosopher. He was a common man, not much inclined to think evil of people. It no more occurred to him at that time that he was the natural prey of seventy-seven separate breeds of profiteers than it did that presently he would be overrun by less figurative lice. When Garibaldi led an infantry attack against the Austrians it was said that he never looked round to see if his men were following; he knew to a dead certainty that at the moment when he reached the enemy he would feel his men's breath hot on the back of his neck. The early volunteer in his blindness imagined that there was between all Englishmen then that oneness of faith, love, and courage.

* * * * *

Everything helped, for a time, to keep him the child that

he was. Except in the matter of separation from civilian friends his daily life was pretty well that of the happiest children. The men knew nothing and hoped for wonderful things. Drill, to the average recruit, was like some curious game or new dance, various and rhythmic, and not very hard: it was rather fun for adults to be able to play at such things without being laughed at. Their lives had undergone an immense simplification. Of course, an immense simplification of life is not certain to be a wholly good thing. A Zulu's life may be simpler than Einstein's and yet the estate of Einstein may be the more gracious. If a boatload of men holding the Order of Merit were cast away on a desert island they might, on the whole, think the life as beastly as Touchstone found the life in the Forest of Arden. Yet some of those eminent men might find a soul of good in that evil. They might grill all the day and shiver all night, and be half-starved the whole of the time. But their minds would get a rest cure. While they were there they would have to settle no heartrending questions of patronage, nor to decree the superannuation of elderly worthies. The brutal instantaneity of physical wants might be trying; but they would at least be spared, until they were rescued, the solving of any stiff conundrums of professional ethics.

Moulding the pet recreations of civilized men you find their craving to have something simple to do for a change, to be given an easy one after so many twisters. People whose work is the making of calculations or the manipulation of thoughts have been known to find a curiously restful pleasure in chopping firewood or painting tool-sheds till their backs ache. It soothes them with a flattering sense of getting something useful done straight off. So much of their "real" work is a taking of some minute or indirect means to some end remote, dimly and doubtfully visible, possibly—for the dread thought will intrude—not worth attaining. The pile of chopped wood is at least a spice of the ultimate good: visible, palpable, it is success; and the advanced and complex man, the statesman or sociologist who has chopped it, escapes for the moment from

all his own advancement and complication, and savours in quiet ecstasy one of the sane primeval satisfactions.

A country fellow at the pleugh,
His acre's tilled, he's right enough:
A country girl at her wheel,
Her dizzen's done, she's unco weel.

The climber of mountains seeks a similar rapture by going to places where he is, in full exertion, the sum of his physical faculties, little more. Here all his hopes are for things close at hand: ambition lives along one arm stretched out to grasp a rock eighteen inches away; his sole aim in life may be simply the top of a thirty-foot cleft in a steep face of stone. At home, in the thick of his work, he had seemed to be everlastingly threading mazes that no one could thread right to the end; here, on the crags, it is all divinely simplified; who would trouble his head with subtle questionings about what human life will, might, or ought to be when every muscle and nerve are tautly engaged in the primal job of sticking to life as it is?

To have for his work these raptures of play was the joy of the new recruit who had common health and good-humour. All his maturity's worries and burdens seemed, by some magical change, to have dropped from him; no difficult choices had to be made any longer; hardly a moral chart to be conned; no one had any finances to mind; nobody else's fate was put in his hands, and not even his own. All was fixed from above, down to the time of his going to bed and the way he must lace up his boots. His vow of willing self-enslavement for a season had brought him the peace of the soldier, which passeth understanding as wholly as that of the saint, the blitheness of heart that comes to both with their clarifying, tranquillizing acquiescence in some mystic will outside their own. Immersed in that Dantean repose of utter obedience the men slept like babies, ate like hunters, and rediscovered the joy of infancy in getting some rather elementary bodily movement to come right. They

saw everything that God had made, and behold! it was very good. That was the vision.

* * * * *

The mental peace, the physical joy, the divinely simplified sense of having one clear aim, the remoteness from all the rest of the world, all favoured a tropical growth of illusion. A man, says Tennyson, "imputes himself." If he be decent he readily thinks other people are decent. Here were hundreds of thousands of quite commonplace persons rendered, by comradeship in an enthusiasm, self-denying, cheerful, unexacting, sanely exalted, substantially good. To get the more fit to be quickly used men would give up even the little darling vices which are nearest to many simple hearts. Men who had entertained an almost reasoned passion for whisky, men who in civil life had messed up careers for it and left all and followed it, would cut off their whisky lest it should spoil their marching. Little white, prim clerks from Putney—men whose souls were saturated with the consciousness of class—would abdicate freely and wholeheartedly their sense of the wide, unplumbed, estranging seas that ought to roar between themselves and Covent Garden market porters. Many men who had never been dangerous rivals to St. Anthony kept an unwonted hold on themselves during the months when hundreds of reputable women and girls round every camp seemed to have been suddenly smitten with a Bacchantic frenzy. Real, constitutional lazy fellows would buy little cram-books of drill out of their pay and sweat them up at night so as to get on the faster. Men warned for a guard next day would agree among themselves to get up an hour before the pre-dawn winter Réveillé to practise among themselves the beautiful symbolic ritual of mounting guard in the hope of approaching the far-off, longed-for ideal of smartness, the passport to France. Men were known to subscribe in order to get some dummy bombs made with which to practise bomb-throwing by themselves on summer nights after drilling and marching from six in the morning till

five in the evening. How could they not have the illusion that the whole nation's sense of comradeship went as far as their own?

Who of all those who were in camp at that time, and still are alive, will not remember until he dies the second boyhood that he had in the late frosts and then in the swiftly filling and bursting spring and early summer of 1915? The awakening birdnotes of Réveillé at dawn, the two-mile run through auroral mists breaking over a still inviolate England, the men's smoking breath and the swish of their feet brushing the dew from the tips of the June grass and printing their track of darker green on the pearly-grey turf; the long, intent morning parades under the gummy shine of chestnut buds in the deepening meadows; the peace of the tranquil hours on guard at some sequestered post, alone with the sylvester midnight, the wheeling stars and the quiet breathing of the earth in its sleep, when time, to the sentry's sense, fleets on unexpectedly fast and life seems much too short because day has slipped into day without the night-long sleeper's false sense of a pause; and then jocund days of marching and digging trenches in the sun; the silly little songs on the road that seemed, then, to have tunes most human, pretty, and jolly; the dinners of haversack rations you ate as you sat on the roadmakers' heaps of chopped stones or lay back among buttercups.

When you think of the youth that you have lost, the times when it seems to you now that life was most poignantly good may not be the ones when everything seemed at the time to go well with your plans, and the world, as they say, to be at your feet; rather some few unaccountable moments when nothing took place that was out of the way and yet some word of a friend's, or a look on the face of the sky, the taste of a glass of spring water, the splash of laughter and oars heard across midsummer meadows at night raised the soul of enjoyment within you to strangely higher powers of itself. That spirit bloweth and is still: it will not rise for our whistling nor keep a time-table; no wine that we know can give us anything more

than a fugitive caricature of its ecstasies. When it has blown free we remember it always, and know, without proof, that while the rapture was there we were not drunk, but wise; that for a moment some intervening darkness had thinned and we were seeing further than we can see now into the heart of life.

To one recollection at least it has seemed that the New Army's spring-tide of faith and joyous illusion came to its height on a night late in the most beautiful May of 1915, in a hut where thirty men slept near a forest in Essex. Nothing particular happened; the night was like others. Yet in the times that came after, when half of the thirty were dead and most of the others jaded and soured, the feel of that night would come back with the strange distinctness of those picked, remembered mornings and evenings of boyhood when everything that there was became everlastingly memorable as though it had been the morning or evening of the first day. Ten o'clock came and Lights Out, but a kind of luminous bloom still on the air and a bugle blowing Last Post in some far-away camp that kept worse hours than we. I believe the whole hut held its breath to hear the notes better. Who wouldn't, to listen to that most lovely and melancholy of calls, the noble death of each day's life, a sound moving about hither and thither, like a veiled figure making gestures both stately and tender, among the dim thoughts that we have about death the approaching extinguisher—resignation and sadness and unfulfilment and triumph all coming back to the overbearing sense of extinction in those two recurrent notes of "Lights Out"? One listens as if with bowed mind, as though saying "Yes; out, out, brief candle." A moment's silence to let it sink in and the chaffing and laughter broke out like a splash of cool water in summer again. That hut always went to bed laughing and chaffing all round, and, though there was no wit among us, the stories tasted of life, the inexhaustible game and adventure. Looker, ex-marine turned soldier, told us how he had once gone down in a diving-suit to find a lost anchor and struck on the old tin lining out of a crate, from which some

octopian beast with long feelers had reached out at him, and the feelers had come nearer and nearer through the dim water. "What did you do, Filthy?" somebody asked (we called Looker "Filthy" with friendly jocoseness). "I 'opped it," the good fellow said, and the sane anti-climax of real life seemed twice as good as the climax that any Hugo or Verne could have put to the yarn. Another described the great life he had lived as an old racing "hen," or minor sutler of the sport of kings. Hard work, of course. "All day down at Epsom openin' doors an' brushin' coats and shiftin' truck for bookies till you'd make, perhaps, two dollars an' speculate it on the las' race and off back 'ome to London 'ungry, on your 'oofs." Once a friend of his, who had had a bad day, had not walked—had slipped into the London train, and at Vauxhall, where tickets were taken, had gone to earth under the seat with a brief appeal to his fellow travellers: "Gents, I rely on your honour." The stout narrator could see no joke at all in the phrase. He was rather scandalized by our great roar of laughter. "'Is honour! And 'im robbin' the comp'ny! 'nough to take away a man's kerriker!" said the patient walker-home in emergency. It made life seem too wonderful to end; such were the untold reserves that we had in this nation of men with a hold on themselves, of hardy uprightness; even this unhelped son of the gutter, living from hand to mouth in the common lodging-house of slums, a parasite upon parasites, poor little animalcule doing odd jobs for the caterpillars of the commonwealth—even he could persist in carrying steadily, clear of the dirt, the full vase of his private honour. What, then, must be the unused stores of greedless and fearless straightness in others above us, generals and statesmen, men in whom, as in bank-porters, character is three parts of the trade! The world seemed clean that night; such a lovely unreason of optimist faith was astir in us all,

We felt for that time ravish'd above earth
And possess'd joys not promised at our birth.

It seemed hardly credible now, in this soured and quarrelsome country and time, that so many men of different classes and kinds, thrown together at random, should ever have been so simply and happily friendly, trustful, and keen. But they were, and they imagined that all their betters were too. That was the paradise that the bottom fell out of.

L'ENVOI

FROM

"THE WET FLANDERS PLAIN" BY HENRY WILLIAMSON

The church in the peaceful village where I live has a tower of grey stone, in which is a belfry. A clock with gilt hands and Roman numerals shines in the southern wall. It was built into the tower nine years ago, as a memorial to the men of the parish who fell in the Great War. Their names are written in the porch below, on an illuminated scroll protected by glass from the salt winds of the western seaboard country.

Sometimes, when the ringers go up into the room where hang the ropes with the coloured sallies, I go with them, climbing on up the worn stone steps of the dim spiral stairway, past the ringing chamber, to the bells. The ropes and wheels begin to creak; the bells begin to swing, and the tower trembles. Then with a dinning crash the metal tongues smite the deep bronze mouths, and an immense torrent of sound pours out of the narrow doorway.

The great sound sweeps other thought away into the air, and the earth fades; the powerful wraith of those four years of the War enters into me, and the torrent becomes the light and clangour of massed guns assaulting heaven.

I take the weight and strength of the barrage, and grow mighty with it, until it becomes but a seam of sound nicked with flashes, and puny in space and time controlled by the vaster roar of stars in their age-long travail through elemental darkness. I see all life created by those flaming suns of the night, and out of life arises a radiance, wan and phantasmal and pure, the light of Khristos.

The wraith of the War, glimmering with this inner vision,

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bears me to the wide and shattered country of the Somme, to every broken wood and trench and sunken lane, among the broad, straggling belts of rusty wire smashed and twisted in the chalky loam, while the ruddy clouds of brick-dust hang over the shelled villages by day, and at night the eastern horizon roars and bubbles with light.

And everywhere in these desolate places I see the faces and figures of enslaved men, the marching columns pearl-hued with chalky dust on the sweat of their heavy drab clothes; the files of carrying parties laden and staggering in the flickering moonlight of gunfire; the "waves" of assaulting troops lying silent and pale on the tape-lines of the jumping-off places.

Again I crouch with them while the steel glacier rushing by just overhead scrapes away every syllable, every fragment of a message bawled into my ear; while my mind begins to stare fixedly into the bitter dark of imminent death, and my limbs tremble and stiffen as in an icicle; while the gaping, smoking parapet above the rim of my helmet spurts and lashes with machine-gun bullets.

Until in the flame and the rolling smoke I see men arising and walking forward; and I go forward with them, in a glassy delirium wherein some seem to pause, with bowed heads, and sink carefully to their knees, and roll slowly over, and lie still. Others roll and roll, and scream and grip my legs in uttermost fear, and I have to struggle to break away, while the dust and earth on my tunic changes from grey to red.

And I go on with aching feet, up and down across ground like a huge ruined honeycomb, and my wave melts away, and the second wave comes up, and also melts away, and then the third wave merges into the ruins of the first and second, and after a while the fourth blunders into the remnants of the others, and we begin to run forward to catch up with the barrage, gasping and sweating, in bunches, anyhow, every bit of the months of drill and rehearsal forgotten, for who could have imagined that the "Big Push" was going to be this?

We come to wire that is uncut, and beyond we see grey coal-scuttle helmets bobbing about, and the vapour of over-heated machine-guns wafting away in the fountainous black smoke of howitzer shells; and the loud crackling of machine-guns changes to a screeching as of steam being blown off by a hundred engines; and soon no one is left standing.

An hour later our guns are "back on the first objective," and the brigade, with all its hopes and beliefs, has found its grave on those northern slopes of the Somme battlefield.

A year drifts by, and I am standing on a duck-board by a flooded and foul beke in the Salient, listening in the flare-pallid rainy darkness to the cries of tens of thousands of wounded men lost in morasses of Third Ypres. To seek them is to drown with them . . . the living are still toiling on, homeless and without horizons, doing dreadful things under heaven that none want to do, through the long wet days and the longer nights, the weeks, the months, of a bare, sodden winter out of doors.

The survivors are worn out; some of them, tested beyond human dereliction, put the muzzles of their rifles in their mouths, in the darkness of the terrible nights of the Passchendaele morasses, and pull the trigger.

Those at home, sitting in arm-chairs and talking proudly of Patriotism and Heroism, will never realize the bitter contempt and scorn the soldiers have for these and other abstractions; the soldiers feel they have been betrayed by the high-sounding phrases that heralded the War, for they know that the enemy soldiers are the same men as themselves, suffering and disillusioned in exactly the same way.

And in the stupendous roar and light-blast of the final barrage that broke the Hindenburg Line I see only one thing, which grows radiant before my eyes until it fills all my world: the sight of a Saxon boy half crushed under a shattered tank, moaning "Mutter, Mutter, Mutter," out of ghastly grey lips. A British soldier, wounded in the leg, and sitting nearby, hears the words, and dragging himself to the dying boy, takes his

cold hand and says: "All right, son, it's all right. Mother's here with you."

The bells cease, and the power goes from me, and I descend again to the world of the living; and if in some foolish confiding moment I try to explain why I want to re-live those old days, to tear the Truth out of the past so that all men shall see plainly, perhaps someone will say to me, "Oh the War! A tragedy—best forgotten. No use dragging in the skeleton to the feast!" or, "There always will be war: it's deep in human nature." They may say as a friendly hint, "Don't talk about the War before my boy, old chap, if you don't mind. I don't want him unsettled: you know what youngsters are—very impressionable. And after all there is such a thing as loyalty to one's country, you know."

Sometimes it seems even more hopeless, as when I hear a few hundred school-children, march to the local picture palace for patriotic purposes, cheering and booing at a film which only faintly suggests reality, called "The Somme," frantically cheering the "British heroes" in their immaculate uniforms, and booing the "German cowards" who always seem to be hurrying away from the heroic British (O wraiths of the 8th Division at Thiepval!). They booed even when one poor lad in grey, who went forth to fetch water for a dying comrade, was knocked over by a shell.

The children, I know, are but mirrors of the mental attitudes of their parents, of their school and religious teachers; but surely, after the bitter waste and agony of the Lost Generation, it is time that these people should begin to "know what they do."

* * * * *

I must return to my old comrades of the Great War—to the brown, the treeless, the flat and grave-set plain of Flanders—to the rolling, heat-miraged downlands of the Somme—for I am dead with them, and they live in me again. There in the beautiful desolation of rush and willow in the forsaken

tracts I will renew the truths which have quickened out of their deaths: that human virtues are superior to those of national idolatry, which do not arise from the Spirit: that the sun is universal, and that men are brothers, made for laughter one with another: that we must free the child from all things which maintain the ideals of a commercial nationalism, the ideas which inspired and generated the barrages in which ten million men, their laughter corrupted, perished.

I have a little boy now, an innocent who with his friends in the village street laughs in the sunshine; he sings and smiles when he hears the bells on the wind. Must he, too, traverse a waste place of the earth: must the blood and sweat of his generation drip in agony, until the sun darken and fall down the sky, and rise no more upon his world?

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TO ATTEMPT a complete bibliography of war literature would be a task far beyond either the scope or intention of this anthology. The appended list of war books will merely pave the way for the student who wishes to carry his research further. The editor has pointed out that the aim of *Armageddon* was pictorial and panoramic. Naturally the greater stress was laid on works of a purely fictional nature, and the list, under this head, was worked out to include works of importance published before March, 1930. The question of importance is, again, a purely relative and personal one, and it is therefore inevitable that the research student will find omissions. The list under the heading "General" is again, in no sense, exhaustive or complete. Works that the editor would gladly have included in the anthology had either space or the necessary permission been available have been starred.

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ANTHOLOGIES

- DER KRIEG: *International Anthology of War Selections in German* (see Preface)

NOTES ON BOOKS AND AUTHORS

PAUL ALVERDES (*The Whistlers' Room*) was born in 1897 in Strasbourg, his father having been an officer in the German army. His boyhood and youth were passed in Dusseldorf, where he received his education. These years were decisively influenced by his contact with the Youth Movement which at that time found expression in voluntary associations such as the *Wandervogel*. At seventeen, he left the classroom and joined the army as a volunteer for the duration of the war. While serving with the artillery in the La Bassée sector, he received a grave shot wound in the throat which put him in hospital for a year and a half. He was then discharged as unfit for further service and went to Munich to continue his studies. He received his doctorate in philosophy and continued to live in Munich as a writer.

In its first form, *The Whistlers' Room* was written in 1928 as a contribution to a volume in commemoration of Hans Carossa's fiftieth birthday. In the following spring it was recast and expanded and published separately.

ERNST GLAESER (*Glass of 1902*) is at present one of the editors of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. He was born in the year 1902 in the town which he describes in his book. "Class of 1902" is the German army designation of the youths who were born in that year, who were too young to serve when the war broke out, but who would have been subject to call, had the war continued, in 1919. Glaeser was, therefore, of the class who, in Germany suffered almost as much at home during the war as their older brothers at the front, during the formative and most impressionable periods of their lives. *Glass of 1902* is one of many war books which have had infinitely wider success on the Continent than in America. It has been translated from the German into French, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian and Hungarian as well as English.

JAROSLAV HASEK (*The Good Soldier: Schweik*) was born in 1883 at Prague, then capital of the Bohemian province of Austria-Hungary, where his father was a teacher of mathematics. He was ten years old when his father died, leaving the family in straitened circumstances. He left

school and became a shop assistant, but finding this work uncongenial, he decided to continue his studies and subsequently entered the Commercial Academy at Prague. On completing his studies, he became a bank clerk but soon gave up this occupation in favour of authorship.

During the war, he was taken prisoner on the Eastern front and spent several years in Russia. On his return, he began to write his best known work—*The Adventures of the Good Soldier Svejk*, which, according to the original plan was to be completed in six volumes. He died, however, on January 3, 1923, when only four volumes had been written and the story was continued by Karel Vanek. He was a prolific writer and in addition to *Schweik* he has left over sixteen volumes of short stories and sketches.

Schweik passed unnoticed by the general public after its publication until a few years ago when Max Brod, author of *Reubeni* and an accepted leader in the critical world of Central Europe found in its author a vein of rich satire comparable to that of Cervantes and Rabelais. It was enough to start the book on the way to success and it is now fairly well along toward being held as a classic. Its broad, trenchant satire, aimed almost always at the Austrian bureaucracy and the system of military red tape and espionage that bound up the heterogeneous and mutually hostile provinces of the former Dual Empire, could hardly escape appealing to the Czech sense of humour and justice. It is an enduring work in exactly the sense that Rabelais is enduring, owing no particular allegiance to the limitations of time and locale, using the war simply as a background for human caricature and counting tragedy as the light end of the scale of human greed and hypocrisy.

GENERAL P. N. KRASSNOFF (*From Double Eagle to Red Flag*) commanded a Corps of Cossack Cavalry during the World War, and was one of the first to lead the counter attack against Bolshevism when the Russian revolution broke out. Descended himself from an old Cossack family, he was elected Ataman of the Don Cossacks in 1918 and later joined the army of General Youdenitch. When further resistance was futile, he followed the general emigration to Germany, and afterwards to France where he began his literary career at an advanced age and with little previous experience.

From Double Eagle to Red Flag is a work as ambitious in its scope as the longest of Tolstoi's novels. Its opening scenes occur before the Russian-Japanese war, it continues with the cycle that broke down with

the fall of the Empire and runs out into the scenes of the revolutionary aftermath. It has been criticized both for lack of the necessary craftsmanship and artistry that might bring such a vast canvas to life and for faults in historical accuracy.

COLONEL HENRY WILLARD MILLER (*The Paris Gun*) was born in 1884 and served during the war as Chief Engineer for all Heavy Artillery of the American Expeditionary Forces with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel of Ordnance. After the war he continued his work in designing Artillery and preparing text-books in Washington. He is at present Professor and head of the Department of Mechanism and Engineering Drawing at the University of Michigan.

RALPH HALE MOTTRAM (*The Spanish Farm Trilogy*) belongs to that strata of English society which regarded the war as a patriotic necessity at the outset and lived to see it in retrospect as a calamitous happening of untold consequences. He enlisted shortly after the war broke out as a volunteer and was commissioned after training in the O. T.C. at Harrogate. He commenced active service at the front in Flanders during the winter of 1914-15 and after months in the mud of the salient was detached from his battalion for service on the Divisional staff, to adjust the claims of the civilians for damages to their property and crops by the troops billeted on them. For the rest of the war he alternated between service of this nature and active duty at the front, and it is this dual perspective added to his contact with the staffs in control of operations that gives his war writings their wide range of colour and quiet objectivity.

Mr. Mottram was born at Norwich, England, in 1883 and so was in his thirty-first year when the war broke out. This accounts in some measure for the quiet, observant, pedestrian quality of all his war studies and sketches. Until recently a bank clerk, his writing reflects the testimony on the war of the middle classes who took the war as a duty and lived through the mud and blood accepting even the weariness of complete disillusion as part of the game. In his recently published *Personal Record* he has this to say as to his conclusions in retrospect:

On the whole, the attempt of the civilized nations to return to barbarism was a failure. Again and again the most deliberate steps had to be taken to procure an artificial ferocity that human beings no longer feel. The difficulty lies, I think, in the weakening of the fascination which, as I

have said, War exercises on account of its great moments, in common with Religion and Love. Just as religious observance is falling into disuse, if not under suspicion, just as the *grande passion* is no longer lightly excused. . . . so the few great moments of battle are insufficient to obscure the dreary monotony and brainlessness of soldiering.

SERGEY GUSSIEV ORENBURGSKY (*The Land of the Children*) is by birth a Cossack. Like the mystic Gonibesov in his book, he was for a time a priest, but left the Church and became a journalist and a writer. During the revolution he travelled throughout Russia, witnessing uprisings in many districts, living at times under Bolshevik rule in Moscow, again under White rule in the Ukraine, and at last fleeing from Russia through Siberia to China and America. Here he wrote *The Land of the Children* from his own observations of the effects of the war and the recent upheavals in his own country. His first novel, *The Land of the Fathers*, was published by Maxim Gorki in 1905.

SAUL K. PADOVER (*Let The Day Perish*) was born in 1905 at Wolka-Turebska, a village in Austrian Galicia, a few miles from the Russian frontier. At the age of five he entered public school and was preparing for the Gymnasium (High School) when the war broke out. The Austrians were beaten at the border, and the avalanche of the first Russian invasion swept down. Describing this period of his life Mr. Padover writes:

In common with other refugees we fled. In three days the Cossacks overtook us. They murdered, robbed, tortured. It isn't a pleasant story. Forced to turn back we found our property destroyed. For six weeks we starved. We lived like hunted beasts. When the Central Powers made a counter-drive, we were caught between two fires, directly in the centre of the opposing trench lines. During the furious bombardment, we lived in cellars.

Two years after the war, the family succeeded in getting passports and came to America where they settled in Detroit, Michigan. Mr. Padover finished his high school career there and took his degree at the College of the City of Detroit. Later he attended Yale as a graduate student, and is at present doing graduate work at the University of Chicago. Mr. Padover's novel, one of the most vivid records of the war in the Eastern theatre, is still, at the time of writing this, unpublished.

BEN RAY REDMAN (*Down in Flames*) served with the Royal Flying Corps of the British Army on the Ypres front from 1917 to 1919. Commissioned as a first lieutenant, he was assigned as a scout pilot to the 79th squadron and remained in that organization until the armistice. After the war he was for some time literary editor of *The Spur*. Later he became managing editor of *Travel* and editorial and managing editor of G. P. Putnam's Sons. He is at present writing the column "Old Wine in New Bottles" for "Books" of the *New York Herald-Tribune*.

"At the age of ten" writes Fred J. Ringel (*Retrospect*) "shortly after the outbreak of the war in 1914, I had to flee to Berlin where I met my parents after a separation of seven years. Learning the German language, I soon entered the gymnasium. From the peaceful religious atmosphere of my grandparents' house, I was thrown into the turmoil of conflict-torn Berlin.

"Young as I was, the war had been an overwhelming experience. In 1918 I was unemployed and starving in the ranks of the revolutionary masses. Under the influence of the new radical Youth Movement revolt against home and school inevitably followed. With Tolstoyan ideals I fled from the city and worked in the country for three years.

"There had been a war and an unfinished revolution. During the Inflation occurred a more intensive preparation for revolt which, however, was calmed and never came to a head. In 1924, assisting Piscator, I organized Proletarian matinees at the Grosse Schauspielhaus. It was a time of inspired enthusiasm followed by discouraging depression.

"I am twenty-six years old and have been in America for three years. I have been a laundryman, bus-boy, factory worker, office clerk, salesman, window-cleaner. The greatest part of my mature years I spent with publishing houses and in the world of books. In Thuringia, I was also a reporter, editorial writer and critic.

"I came to America in a state of great depression, having in mind a short stay. After three years I am still living in this impressive country and intend to spend the future both here and abroad. I discontinued two manuscripts which I had started abroad, to work on my autobiography the story of my first twenty years. Out of this a novel developed—the story of Joel Tiefer. It will be published next fall."

BAYARD SCHINDEL (*Golden Pilgrimage*) is the son of Isa Glenn, the novelist and was twenty-one years old when his book appeared in

the summer of 1929. His father was Brigadier General S. J. Bayard Schindel, his grandfather and great grandfather were both army men, and he himself was brought up to follow the traditional career. He turned to literature however, and his first novel justified the choice. Like *Class of 1902*, *Golden Pilgrimage* deals with the psychological effects of the war on the mind of a growing child.

EDWARD THOMPSON (*These Men Thy Friends*) is on the Faculty of Oriental Languages at Oxford and lives at Boar's Hill, the home of John Masefield. For a dozen years he was an educational missionary in India and is reputed to be the foremost European scholar of Bengali. During the war he served in the Mesopotamian and Palestine campaigns, winning the Military Cross at the Battle of Istabulet and also being mentioned in despatches. From 1925 to 1927 he was an adviser and editor of Benn Brothers, the London publishers. He is the author of several monographs and plays in addition to a volume of Poems and a previous novel, *An Indian Day*.

FRITZ VON UNRUH (*Way of Sacrifice*) comes of a Prussian military family and at the age of eighteen was appointed adjutant to the third son of the former Kaiser. Showing a strong indisposition toward the military career, however, he wrote his first play *Officers* in 1912. It was produced by Max Reinhardt and caused a military and family scandal. His second play, *Louis Ferdinand, Prince of Prussia*, was ready for the stage when the Crown Prince attended a rehearsal and stopped the production.

When the second Verdun offensive was being planned he was called on by General Headquarters to write a book which would serve as propaganda for the German troops discouraged by the immense losses and failures of the previous year. The result was *Way of Sacrifice* one of the most astonishing of the anti-war documents that have ever been published. It was suppressed, and its author officially adjudged insane by way of punishment. He entered the service of the Grand Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt and remained as preceptor to the Duke's sons until the end of the war.

Even during the revolutionary years when anti-militarist novels and documents of all sorts were the order of the day in Germany, the publication of *Way of Sacrifice* created something of a sensation. Its effect is

inescapable, for it bears all the imprints of the emotional frenzy under which it was written.

JAMES B. WHARTON (*Squad*) is 33 years old and was born in Philadelphia. He left the University of Pennsylvania in 1917 to enlist in the army and went overseas. He was wounded by a machine gun bullet in his first engagement and was sent to a hospital. Later he went through the Argonne Offensive, fought at the St. Mihiel salient and was successively a private, sergeant, second and first lieutenant in the 103rd Cavalry, 103rd Engineers, 103rd Trench Mortar Battery and 111th Infantry. At the close of the war he took up newspaper work and served as European correspondent for the North American Newspaper Alliance. Three years ago he abandoned journalism and went to live in Vienna where he wrote his first novel *Squad*. His second novel, *The Marsh Wife* was published in February, 1930.

ARNOLD ZWEIG (*The Case of Sergeant Grischa*) was born in Silesia, Germany, in 1887. He published his first volume of short stories at the age of twenty-three and in 1913 his play *Ritual Murder in Hungary* was produced successfully throughout Germany and Austria.

From 1915 to the end of the war he was a soldier in a German labour corps in Northern France, Serbia and Macedonia as well as on the Eastern front. His war experiences form the basis for *The Case of Sergeant Grischa* as well as of several other war novels which are now in the course of preparation.

The success of *Grischa* was as immediate in Germany and England as it was in America when it was published in 1929, and distributed by the Book-of-the-Month Club.



NORTH SEA

SKAGERRACK (NORWAY)

NORWAY
SWEDEN

FINLAND

BALTIC SEA

DENMARK

HOLLAND
AMSTERDAM

BELGIUM
BRUSSELS

GERMANY

BERLIN

WARSAW

POLAND

10
BREST-LITOVSK

3
BETHUNE

12
PARIS

FRANCE

SWITZERLAND

7
GORITIA

VIENNA
AUSTRIA

ITALY

1
SARAJEVO

8
SALONIKA
GREECE

5
CALCUTTA

TURKEY

MEDITERRANEAN

SICILY

AFRICA

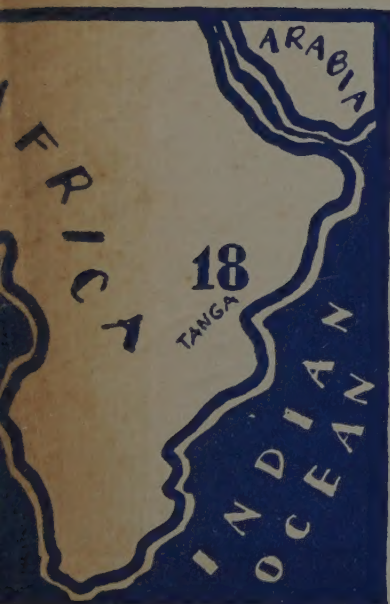
PETROGRAD

14

U S S I A

MINSK

11



Y

JERUSALEM

AKABAH

17 ARABIA

- 1 " JUNE 28, 1914 "
- 2 " THE MARNE "
- 3 " FIELD AND TRENCH "
- 4 " VERDUN "
- 5 " GALLIPOLI "
- 6 " THE DARK RUSSIAN FOREST "
- 7 " RETREAT FROM THE ISONZO "
- 8 " WAR IN THE HARBOR "
- 9 " JUTLAND "
- 10 " BATTLE OF THE GENERALS "
- 11 " THE BLACK BEAST "
- 12 " THROUGH THE WHEAT "
- 13 " THE LOOK OF BERLIN "
- 14 " PETROGRAD 1914 "
- 15 " DEFECTION "
- 16 " ON TO BAGDAD "
- 17 " REVOLT IN THE DESERT "
- 18 " THE BRIGHT AFRICAN SUN "
- 19 " DEFEAT "

16

BAGDAD



